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AFTER the discussion of the last ten days, following in the wake of President Wilson's address to Congress of February 11th, American public opinion should be able to reach a better understanding of the obstacles which his novel and daring diplomatic campaign is intended to remove and the objects which it is designed to serve. The obstacles are complex, shifting, intangible, yet extremely real and stubborn. The objects are less complex and more permanent, but they need frequently to be indicated rather than clearly and positively expressed, and he is obliged to unfold them cautiously and in their unfolding to adjust a remote and far-reaching purpose to an immediate, an elusive and frequently an involved condition of the public mind. His political offensive, it should now be understood, is being directed primarily but not exclusively against the ruling classes in Germany and Austria-Hungary. It is in part directed against those classes in all the belligerent and neutral countries who with or without knowing it seek to subordinate ideas to force and policy to power. President Wilson is exhausting every resource of an unprecedentedly effective mechanism of publicity to create the kind of public opinion throughout the world which alone can give reality to a comparatively permanent and just general peace.

THE continued failure of so many leaders of public opinion to understand how essentially what he is trying to do is tied up with his method of doing it is disheartening. On one recent morning the New York newspapers contained two striking illustrations of a failure to penetrate his method by those who claim to agree with his objects. In a statement given out by the executive council of the A. F. of L. the following sentences occur: "The peace parleys between Russia and Germany have shown the futility of diplomatic negotiations with Prussian militarists until they are convinced they cannot superimpose their will on the rest of the world. Force is the basis of their whole organization and is the only argument they will understand." It would be far truer to say "The peace parleys between Russia and Germany have shown how indispensable it is to add diplomatic negotiations to military operations in order to convince Prussian militarists of the obstacles which they will have to surmount before they can superimpose their will on the rest of the world." The negotiations begun at Brest-Litovsk are now being carried on by President Wilson who can argue effectively because his arguments are backed by the military and economic resources of the United States. He is negotiating and agitating at the same time that he is fighting, because war unredeemed by a frank international policy and an international policy which is not reinforced by the ability to fight, would both result in the triumph of the militarist classes and point of view.

OUR American Bolsheviki, as they delight to call themselves, are as obtuse as our American equivalent to the German majority socialists. At the very moment when Germany stands re-

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vealed as the implacable enemy of the Russian revolution and the unabashed mainstay of the Russian counter-revolution, at the moment when the real Bolsheviki may have been obliged to consent to a German peace as the only means of saving the revolution, their copyists in this country are declaring "the war does not matter any more" and propose wholly to abandon fighting for negotiation. They still denounce American participation in the war, in spite of the increasing demonstration that American intervention is the salutary fact of the existing international situation. It is chiefly America which stands between the world and a militarist or pro-German settlement of the war. If this country had stayed out, either Germany would have won and imposed her own terms or the German government would have forced the Allies to accept a peace based upon territorial annexations and compensations. Such is the result at which the German government is now frankly aiming, as was indicated clearly by von Hertling's speech of last month, and it took a combination of the peace parleys at Brest-Litovsk and President Wilson's political offensive to bring out unequivocally what he was trying to do. If the Allies negotiate with such a government without fighting, they are bound to fall its victims. If they fight without negotiating, they fail to make use of their greatest advantage, and they tend to fall under the control of their own military minded classes.

DURING the next few months this combination of fighting and negotiation will bear substantianl fruits. The frank attempt of the German government to negotiate not a general settlement based on the common acceptance of underlying principles but a series of special treaties based necessarily on the trading of compensations, the prospect of an indefinite continuation of the war, the consciousness on the part of the German liberals of an increasingly bad cause, and the improbability of obtaining any cash benefits from such a policy of special imperialist bargains—all these considerations will finally disgust thoughtful and liberal Germans with the political strategy of their own government. The Frankfurter Zeitung has already uttered the criticism of the von Hertling policy which, mildly as it is expressed, is utterly damning. It says, "The peace with the Ukraine appears to furnish proof that from this vast wreckage even the greatest diplomatists are unable to rehabilitate a single piece of the shattered world, and that only the conclusion of a general peace, with guaranties from all, can offer real safeguards." President Wilson's peculiar distinction among modern statesmen comes from the fact that he alone understood this truth.

AS The New Republic goes to press the news from Russia is contradictory and alarming. There are rumors both of a separate peace, accepted by the Bolsheviki and of the supersession of the Bolsheviki by a socialist revolutionary government headed by Tchernoff. One of these rumors is almost certainly true. Both may be true. In either event the political problem of the war is completely changed, and comment on the change will have to be reserved until our next issue.

IN many quarters there is a disposition to draw unfavorable contrasts between the attitude of ship building labor and that of ship building capital. For the adjustment of grievances there was a Labor Adjustment Board, whose findings the employers were ready to accept. The employees, on the other hand, not only refused to bind themselves to accept such findings, but actually went out on strike and returned to work only upon the intervention of the President. A comparison in these terms, however, is unfair to labor. The real analogy lies between the behavior of the men in holding out for wages and conditions that seemed fair to them, and the behavior of the employers in holding out for government contracts that seemed fair to them. It never occurred to us to ask the ship building companies to proceed with their preparations, pending the decisions of a "Contract Adjustment Board." If we could have made such an arrangement, we should have saved several precious months that were frittered away while the details of contracts were being arranged. The fact is, however, that the companies could not be sure that the government would treat them fairly if they committed themselves to the work before they had secured definite contracts. Nor had the workers assurance of fair treatment. They have such assurance now in President Wilson's announcement that "it is the duty of the government to see that the best possible conditions of labor are maintained." General as the statement is, it is under the circumstances peculiarly binding on the government.

PROFITEERING inquiries will doubtless engage the attention of Congress more and more as the months progress. The country may be somewhat shocked to learn how much money is being paid at Hog Island for the "know how," but it is a safe guess that the same agent of production is being rewarded with equal generosity in most of the other ship building plants. In peace, when time is not a pressing matter, it is doubtless possible for the government to make contracts that leave no opportunity for excessive profits. In war this is not possible. A rational plan would be to

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make the best contracts possible, and then to recover through taxation practically the whole of any profit that still occurs. In England the government recovers four-fifths of such profits: if we recovered as great a proportion, or better, nine-tenths, we could rest easily under the disclosure of enormous business gains. But Congress still appears incapable of understanding that all the turmoil of profiteering inquiries will accomplish little as compared with what could be accomplished by a revision of the tax laws, carrying the rate on true war profits to a level that is practically confiscatory.

IN Washington people have been as superstitious about the quality of appointments to public positions as about the whims of a thunderstorm. No one knows where the lightning will strike until the bolt flashes; and though it may aim at the most inconvenient spot, there is no changing its purpose or revoking its decision. So accustomed have people become to the natural laws of public appointment under the present administration, that any attempt to introduce the human will into the process seems almost sacrilegious. Nevertheless the new Labor Administration has had the temerity to try it. Unlike any other of the war organizations, it began its work with the establishment of a personal bureau, whose sole business it is to find all available men with the proper training for the highly important positions to be established, compare their qualifications and recommend for appointment. If, as is reported, Congress has any hesitation about entrusting large appropriations to the Department of Labor for the development of the new enterprise, it should remember this uniquely intelligent beginning and be reassured. The men spending the funds of the Labor Administration will probably be as well fitted for their responsibility as any in the government.

A MAGAZINE entitled the Masses edited by Mr. Max Eastman was one of the first and least necessary casualties of the present war, but its editors have very properly refused to consent to its extinction. It has been resurrected in the somewhat chastened form of the Liberator, and as the Liberator it will support the war aims of President Wilson, and presumably the war which the American government is waging in order to promote those aims. Everybody who got enjoyment and profit from reading the Masses will, we are sure, get enjoyment and profit from reading the Liberator, and among this numerous and not unintelligent middle class audience we should like to include ourselves. Since the Masses ceased publication, we have missed a needed source of edification and correction. Whenever the editors of the Masses became bored with the daily routine of demolishing such institutions as property, the family, law, the church and the state, they could always fall back on an exposure of the New Republic as a purveyor of fictitious ideology or furtive militarism. We trust that the Liberator will devote as much space to this work of chastising the New Republic as the Masses formerly did. We need it in order to help us endure the equally severe chastisement which we receive from such publicists as William English Walling and such newspapers as the Montgomery [Alabama] Advertiser.

CRITICISM of the administration railway bill is centred not upon the question of compensation, which might have been expected to raise serious difficulties, but upon the question of vesting the control over rates in the President instead of in the Interstate Commerce Commission, and the question of the limit to be fixed on the period of control. The Interstate Commerce Commission has been an efficient instrument of administration, and if the railways are to be returned to private control under the conditions prevailing before the war, it would be extremely unfortunate if the Commission should be shorn of any of its powers or weakened in its tradition. But this is not equivalent to saying that it is the best instrument for determining rates in war time. The government must have a free hand in routing shipments and even in many cases in determining ports of destination. If it finds the Atlantic ports afflicted with freight congestion, it may desire to divert traffic to Gulf ports, and it ought to be free to make more promptly than the Interstate Commerce Commission is in the habit of doing such changes in rates as considerations of justice to the shippers require. As to the time limit, it would be in the national interest if no limit were fixed at all. We ought never to hand the railways back to private control, unless we can do so under the form of a unified national system. How much time the necessary work of reorganization would require it is now absolutely impossible to foretell.

DO not stop reading the following sentences until you find out where they appeared. "Labor will demand and get a larger share of the profits of industry and it will demand a voice in each industry in determining the conditions under which it shall work." "There is not an absolute unity of interest; there cannot be permanent peace. All we can hope for is compromise under conditions that obtain today. . . But the present compromise will be the greatest for many a

MASSACHUSETTS

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day, for it will definitely establish labor's voice in the control of industry." "Management inefficiency more than matches, count for count, labor inefficiency." "Business based on the idea of maximum cash returns to the owner, at any cost to competitors, to labor, to the social order, to the government, was bound to be a boomerang. The labor unrest is the instinctive protest of ten thousand years against it." Are these statements from some socialist paper, some radical labor organ, some agitator's speech? No, they are from editorials in the Engineering News Record, a trade publication of high standing, which is concerned with practical business affairs and circulates among employers. Similar editorials have been published recently in the American Machinist, and others of the reputable and prosperous trade journals owned by the McGraw-Hill Company. They will be read by business men throughout the United States, many of whom have been consistently conservative in all matters of public policy, and especially bitter in opposition to union labor. It takes courage for a magazine dependent solely on the good will of a limited class so to violate the ancient prejudices of its readers. But as all wise observers of industry know, it would be foolhardy, in the present time of revolution, not to admit the truth.

IN urging volunteers to "inquire into" disloyal professors, with a view to hunting them out of their universities, the National Security League has enlisted some singular specimens of ardent spirit. Up to the present the booby prize undoubtedly belongs to Dr. William H. Hobbs of Ann Arbor. Writing to the Detroit Free Press a week ago Dr. Hobbs conveyed the alarming news that Professor Thorstein Veblen had come out in favor of unconditional submission to Germany "in order to save the sacrifice of blood and treasure which resistance involves." This edict Dr. Hobbs believed himself to have found in Veblen's year-old work on the nature of peace. "One is fairly stupefied," he says, "in contemplating the moral depths to which the flabby conscience of this pacifist has permitted him to descend." It is very difficult for anyone who has read Professor Veblen's book to know exactly what Dr. Hobbs means. If the inquisitor had read all of the book he so grotesquely misunderstands, he would have discovered that Dr. Veblen scouts the idea of submitting to Germany and made out the strongest possible case for the United States entering the world war. This sort of half-cock accusation is recklessly reinforced by the Detroit paper's headlines. "Submit to foe, urges teacher. Permit Kaiser to rule world to save gold and blood, writes pacifist. Yet Professor is retained as instructor of youth in state university." It may comfort the National Security League to learn that this last statement is no longer true. It would be physically difficult to oust Mr. Veblen from the university he has recently left to enter into the service of the government at Washington.

Where to Find a Plan

THERE are promising indications of an agreement between the President and Congress on the reorganization of the administrative machinery for conducting the war. Privately, and perhaps publicly, the President will give Congressional leaders a forecast of what use he will make of the Overman bill which the administration submitted in answer to its critics. The bill confers on the President full authority to consolidate all existing government agencies in the interests of economical and effective administration. There has been concern in Congress lest this measure bestow upon the President autocratic and unnecessary authority. This concern Mr. Wilson will apparently be able to quiet, and a reconciliation will insure the passage of the bill. With the power it will give him, the President will be able to effect almost as complete a reorganization as he desires.

What the present system needs above all else is the creation of a central planning agency. Somewhere in the administrative system there must be set up a body of executive deliberation which will have the time and brains to supply a strategy that has taken account of every demand and every contingency. Up to the present time there has been nothing to indicate that our supplies of man-power and tonnage and materials are being manipulated in harmony with one accepted plan. Our war organization is a system of unfederated units. What experience in Washington shows most plainly is the need for a planning agency with vision broad enough to look beyond departmental lines and write a programme that will consolidate the energies now disparate and even competitive.

How is such an agency to be set up? The plan most generally proposed is for the creation of a new council, separate from and superior to the existing Cabinet, and containing no member who is also a member of the Cabinet. With the powers conferred upon him by the Overman bill it would be possible for the President of his own accord and without any further legislating by Congress to introduce into the administrative system this sort of separate and superior council. We do not think, however, that the President would do well to follow this course. And the reason is that it would be impracticable for either Congress or the Presi-

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dent to equip this council with genuine executive powers. The American administrative machinery is not orderly—either by virtue of original planning or as the result of long years of slow simplification. It is rather a machinery which is still new, a machinery fashioned on no orderly plan, but with all manner of wheels and special appliances added on in departments where they do not belong. Disturb too greatly the present means of issuing commands and many of these wheels would not turn. The machinery is not of the flexible sort than can conveniently be turned over to the actual executive direction of a small number of new officials unfamiliar even with their own authority. Neither is it likely that these new officials could satisfactorily exercise administrative power by proxy, through the agency of the present Cabinet heads. In Washington too much administrative power is already being exercised by proxy.

Most advocates of the plan for a superior war council, a council separate from the present Cabinet, admit that this criticism lies against their proposal. They recognize that it would be impossible to endow the new council with genuine and plenary powers of administration. But they turn this criticism into an argument in support of their programme. Is not the function of the council, they ask, essentially a deliberate one: the examination of assets and the framing of a plan? Can the council hope to perform this function unless, in fact, it keeps itself free from the responsibility for actual administrative direction?

In our judgment no central war council can hope to perform its proper function unless—far from evading the responsibility for actual administrative direction—it possesses every shred and patch of the administrative powers in existence. Another axiom in Washington, now, is that "planning" cannot be separated from "administering." What was the reason for everyone's criticism of the General Staff of the army? It was because—until Mr. Baker's most recent reorganization—the General Staff possessed no genuine powers of administration. It could formulate plans. But it could not actually execute them. That is why its plans were only unreal and academic plans. And the plans of any war council which did not have genuine and plenary powers of administration must in the same manner remain unreal and academic. Actual executive direction cannot be separated from the work of creating a programme.

Any satisfactory use of the powers the Overman bill would confer upon the President must recognize this union. The type of war council we must have is a council so free from administrative detail that it will be able to study evidence and formulate plans, but not so stripped of administrative powers that its plans will remain a programme and nothing more. It is the type of council that in theory the present Cabinet constitutes.

Why is it necessary to say "in theory"? For two reasons. In the first place the Cabinet does not contain several such important war executives as Mr. Hoover and Mr. Hurley. This fault, particularly with the reorganization powers granted by the Overman bill, could quickly be corrected. The second weakness in the present Cabinet as a war council is that its members are not anywhere near free enough from the run of administrative detail to be able actually to look over the whole field of probabilities and formulate an inclusive war programme. But this weakness, too, could easily be set right. There is at least one assistant secretary in every department of the Cabinet. More can be provided if they are needed. And it would require only the President's recommendation to shift to these under-secretaries the greater part of that departmental detail on which the chiefs themselves now spend so much of their time.

Would the Cabinet, freed in this way for the consideration of central questions and rounded out by the addition of such officials as Mr. Hoover and Mr. Hurley, supply a war council that would be likely to succeed? Not unless a further addition is made. There must be supplied a centralized control. Other boards that were to draw plans, such boards as the Council of National Defense, have lacked the only instrument that can possibly centralize control. That instrument is the President himself, supported by some agency able to make investigations and offer recommendations. The presence of the Chief Executive in any deliberation of plans is necessary, because in no other way can there be genuine "coordination." And the President needs this investigating agency to supply an independent source of information. At present Mr. Wilson must rely on the report of a department chief who may want to be fair, but who cannot be impartial and sufficiently critical. A scientific planning and investigating agency would supply this want. It would be the "overhead" of the President as a coordinator. It would bring to the President genuine information which no interested Cabinet officer can furnish.

Of such a "war council" as the Cabinet would be, thus organized, there is one final criticism that can be made: the charge that the members of the "council" would still be specialized chiefs who could not reach conclusions with the broadest motives. Each would still be primarily concerned with plans under debate only as they affect the interests of his own department. In answer to this criticism it must again be observed that only by including such executives, executives concerned

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with specialized interests, can the war council be vested with genuine powers of administration. With a Cabinet reorganized on this basis we should have a council with time to formulate plans, with complete authority to put them into effect, with the President as pivot, and with provision for a second and independent source of information and deliberation. All the essentials of a good war organization are here.

The Breakdown in Our Industrial Generalship

WE were prepared to be somewhat apologetic over our army. It had been so long ignored and starved; how could it be expected to stand up alongside of the magnificent military organizations that had been the glory and the profound financial care of the nations of continental Europe? When, before the war, the German military writers ranked our army somewhere between those of Rumania and Montenegro, we did not dissolve in laughter. But we have underestimated our military competence. We now actually have an army on which we can count. The hundreds of thousands of young men drawn out of civil life are working patiently, persistently, to acquire the technique which, added to their native spirit, will make them take an honorable place beside the world's best soldiers. Nobody who has seen our soldiers in the training camps at home or in France has the least doubt that they will acquit themselves like men in the firing line. The Germans may not believe in them yet, but presently they will.

We were apologetic over our merchant marine. There has been so much talk in recent years of the disappearance of the American flag from the high seas that most of us had gained the impression that we had no seagoing ships worth mentioning. We now find that our merchant marine is far from negligible in volume and that our mariners are competent to pick their way as skilfully among mines and lurking submarines as the best of their craft. We were in some doubt as to the ability of our shipping to convey across the Atlantic even the small army we originally contemplated. But we have already transported—with some aid from our Allies, it is true—a much larger army, with a loss of life proportionately less than any similar transportation enterprise in this war has cost. Our merchant marine has responded efficiently to our national needs, and if the war is prolonged, we shall find ourselves possessed of one of the greatest and most efficient mercantile fleets afloat.

But we were proud of our industrial prowess. Though we thought we might not be able to fight like other nations, or sail ships in competition with them, in all that pertained to the production of goods we could outdo the world. It was the pride that goeth before a fall. Instead of the ships we need, we are launching explanations. Instead of guns, we are producing blue-prints. Instead of coal, we are furnishing holidays. Instead of food we are preparing good resolutions. We, a materialistic nation—oh, what a baseless compliment!

There is something vitally wrong with our industrial generalship. Our captains of industry are not winning the campaign in which they hold command. But wait, is it just to concentrate the blame upon the captains of industry? How about the privates of industry, the laborers? Even today, when every one who has eyes at all can see that the stake of the country in the successful outcome of the war is tremendous, have we not strikes without number? We have strikes affecting not merely the industries that we could make shift to do without, but even that most vital of all our industries, ship building. Strikes are the spectacular element in the evidence of our defective industrial condition, but they are a relatively unimportant element. What we do not see, but what is of paramount importance, is the sapping away of positive performance by unwilling, uninterested labor, by the ceaseless shifting from job to job, by the days of loafing interspersed with the days of employment. A strike, when our industry is devoted to war work, is only a mutiny. An army may be in good fighting trim in spite of sporadic mutinies. But an army is headed for helter-skelter rout when its general morale is bad. And there is no denying that at many points the morale of our industrial army is bad.

When the morale of an army fails, it is useless to try to distribute the blame over the mass of the privates. Morale depends upon the generalship of the present and the tradition built up by vast generalship. If a general expects his men to do their part, it is his first business to make them feel that the campaign is their enterprise as well as his own. If it had not been perfectly natural for every private in the French force to say, "I fought the Germans at Verdun," the Germans would not have been beaten. Our industrial generals have not succeeded in making their men feel that captains of industry and men are cooperating in a great common enterprise. The shipyard workman after hours does not say, "I am building the ships that are to put the might of America squarely across the Kaiser's path." Instead he says, "I'm working at yard so-and-so. Pay's good, but I don't like it. Where are you working? Pay good?"

The military general knows besides that more

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than a consciousness of common enterprise is necessary to keep up the morale of his command. He knows that he must look after the sheltering of his men, and their mess, and their amusements. If a swarm of sutlers of the vulture tribe settle down to prey on the soldiers, it is the business of the general to expel them before anger over exploitation begins to rankle. If nets of vice are too obviously spread for the soldier, it is the general's duty to sweep them away. And if life appears to the soldiers hopelessly dull, the general recognizes that the problem is a serious one and demands effective intervention. The whole of the soldier's life is matter of concern to the military general.

Contrast the attitude of the industrial general. How his workmen live, whether they are put to intolerable inconvenience, whether they are preyed upon, he regards as of no direct concern to him. Indeed, there are instances enough in which the industrial general participates in the plunder from his personnel. The company boarding house, company store, company saloon, company brothel are not yet wholly extinct. So persistent has been the tradition of sordid profit-seeking motives that any intervention on the part of the employer in the life of his employees outside of the shop is generally viewed askance by self-respecting laborers. Employers who might otherwise do much to alleviate the conditions of working class life in mushroom industrial centres are thereby deterred from action. And so we see shipyards erected at points where there are no adequate accommodations for workingmen, munitions plants extending in towns where all possible living quarters are held at ruinous rentals. If the intolerable rate of labor turnover does at last awaken the employer to action, it is likely to be of the lamest sort conceivable. Readers of the New York press will recall, for example, the order of the Public Service Commission in the bitter days of February permitting the Staten Island street railways to run open cars, to carry the shipbuilding hands to their work. Imagine a military general planning to carry his soldiers for miles in open cars for their daily drills.

We are experiencing nothing new in the present breakdown of our industrial generalship. It is brought vividly to our attention merely because industry has become our chief offensive arm in war. In time of peace we pay in social unrest, in inadequate provision for the people's wants, for the same defect in our economic organization. Every student of scientific management knows that we come nowhere near getting out of our working personnel the services of which it is capable.

And for this state of affairs we have to blame a bad tradition, a faulty technique. Our industrial managers are trained to look upon labor, not as a cooperating agent but as a commodity. As they buy coal or cotton or wheat in the market at the lowest price, so they try to buy labor. As they devise all manner of mechanical tests for grading the materials they use, so they attempt to grade the labor they buy. But all one can buy in the end is the slave value of a man. If you want his freeman's value, which you must have if you would produce efficiently, you can get it only by securing his full cooperation.

How is the cooperation of labor to be secured? The best employers manage to secure it through instinctive adjustment. But in a state in which men become employers—or to continue our metaphor, are elevated to generalship—by mechanical or financial ability, the employer who can really handle men must remain sporadic. We shall never organize our industry well until we make up our minds that the command of men is a very special function, not at all analogous to the purchase of goods, and that for this function we must have quite special training and a special tradition.

Mr. Baker's Vindication

WHAT would we think of a Reichstag committee which, in investigating the conduct of the war, neglected to call on Hindenburg and Lüdendorff? Or a committee of the Chamber of Deputies which overlooked General Foch? Or a deputation from the House of Commons which interviewed everybody in the War Office except General Sir William Robertson? Yet the American Congress has just furnished such an investigation. It called as witnesses the Secretary of War, chiefs of bureaus, and even minor subordinates of the War Industries Board, but it had nothing to ask of the General Staff or its chief. For a committee which is so set on centralization of authority, this is a curious failure, a significant confession. The General Staff was brought into being for the definite purpose of planning and of supervising the execution of plans in the War Department. Its function is to attend to that very coordination of bureaus and divisions which hitherto has been so flagrantly lacking.

Perhaps the neglect is due to a guilty conscience. Before the war, Congress, abetted by bureau chiefs, did much to obstruct the growth of the General Staff. As late as 1916 it forbade the Staff to exercise administrative powers. Fortunately Secretary Baker outwitted the intention of the obstructionists and by a wise interpretation of the law retained nominal power for the Staff. Its actual relations with the bureaus, however, remained loose. How could such a military authority as Senator Cham-

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berlain miss the annual report of General Hugh L. Scott, retired Chief of Staff? On September 27th General Scott wrote in detail about the defects of the staff as organized, and added: "Above all, I express the hope that a fearless examination of this question will be undertaken, freed from every touch of personal interest or prejudice and animated solely by the desire to arrive at the best possible organization of the War Department, one which shall furnish to all the extremities of the military establishment that rapid and vigorous impulse which can come only from perfectly concerted effort at the centre."

Secretary Baker therefore deserves all the more credit for the thorough reorganization of the General Staff which he has just promulgated—one which puts all other minor changes in the department into their proper framework. For his bitterest critics in Congress never mentioned the need of this reform, and at any other time would certainly have blocked it.

By the new order the General Staff is made into a genuine administrative overhead for the War Department and the army. It will consist of five divisions, each under an Assistant Chief of Staff with direct power over his own work. (Previously the Staff was divided into committees, whose chairmen could only study questions and report to the Chief of Staff for his action.) An executive division will have charge of the organization of the staff and bureaus and the collection of statistical information. A purchase and supply division will supervise and direct the purchases of the bureaus, and will have priority powers. It is this division which is headed by Colonel Pierce and to which Mr. Stettinius is attached. A storage and traffic division will have charge of the storage and shipment of all supplies and munitions, and the transportation of troops, both inland and across the ocean. At the head of this division is Major General Goethals, who at the same time is Acting Quartermaster General. A war plans division, headed by the President of the War College, will plan the organization, equipment and training of the army proper, and be in charge of military intelligence. And finally, there will be an army operations division, in general charge of operations, recruitment, mobilization, cantonments, hospitals, sanitation, and the like.

Certain phrases in this order stand out with bold reassurance. "Each division, with the exception of the war plans division, will have office space *in the War Department building.*" No more sending of important immediate questions three miles down the river. "The Chief of Staff is directed . . . to attach to the General Staff such personnel, officers *and civilians,* that the work of the General Staff may proceed." The overhead may be enlarged to meet its task, and it may include men of expert civilian experience, men not wound up in military red tape. Mr. Stettinius is the first striking example. Mr. Lilly, the shipping expert, is another. "The chiefs of the several bureaus, corps and other agencies *will communicate directly* with the chiefs of the several divisions of the General Staff." No more roundabout transmission of reports and recommendations through the Adjutant General, with consequent delay and confusion. "The officer in charge of each division of the General Staff is authorized to *issue instructions* of the Secretary of War. . . ." The staff will have executive power, instead of mere aloof "supervising" power over coordinate bureaus.

This order removes the fear that Secretary Baker will try to convert his "war council" of former bureau chiefs into an administrative organ. The council will simply consult and advise, but the action will be taken by the Secretary through the Chief of Staff and his subordinates. Major General Peyton C. March, the newly selected Acting Chief of Staff, is as well equipped for his task as any officer in the army. With Pershing and Crowder he was an observer with the Japanese during the Russian war; he has done administrative work both in the Philippines and under the Adjutant General in this country; and he comes fresh from being chief of our field artillery in France.

So far as reorganization inside the War Department can go, the Secretary's new order sets the stage for any useful change that may be made. It even reaches out towards a ministry of munitions, with its division of purchases and supplies, its increase of civilian personnel, and its centralization of all storage and traffic under Major General Goethals, at the same time Acting Quartermaster General. The subordinate remoulding of the bureaus is well planned and vigorously in process. There remains only the problem of linking together the purchasing and transportation of other departments under a general council.

The publicity incidental to the Congressional investigation stimulated more quick and thorough reforms than would otherwise have been probable. But now that its work is accomplished, Mr. Baker can truthfully say that the one central change, the change without which all others would have been valueless, was made possible by his own foresight of months ago, in a ruling which opposed the wishes of Congress and most of the bureaucrats, and that it was accomplished at this time without the slightest help or misunderstanding from his Congressional critics.

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Spruce and the I. W. W.

THE strikes that are dislocating our shipyards are part of the penalty we are paying for the unhealthy basis upon which the relationship between management and men has traditionally rested. For months last summer eastern shipyards were tied up because the employers refused to deal with their men collectively, to recognize their right to organize. For years the labor leaders have had to fight with their backs to the wall to save their organization from annihilation. Even now when the shipping and operators are making a great outcry over the shortage of competent labor, certain of them are employing detectives to "spot" holders of trade union cards and are systematically rejecting even skilled mechanics who confess their trade union membership. One result of this policy of relentless opposition to collective bargaining has been that the fighting type of labor leader has, by a process of natural selection, been brought to the top; and the fighter is rarely well equipped for the kind of patient negotiation which the present situation demands. The refusal of the president of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners to bind himself in advance to the decisions of the Shipbuilding Wage Adjustment Board appears to be a case in point. He is apparently one of those fighting leaders whose experience has made them distrustful of all outside intervention, and who believe it their duty to fight their demands through to the bitter end.

But the labor situation in the shipyards, so far as the men now actually employed are concerned, is not so desperate as it appears. It will probably clear itself up once the government takes courage to come out squarely for the principle of collective bargaining and level standards of hours and pay on all work done either by the government directly or by private employers under contract with the government. Much of the present confusion in the shipyards is traceable to the divergent standards enforced by employers executing open contracts for the government; employers under restrictive contracts with the Emergency Fleet Corporation; and governmental departments, like the navy, operating their own plants. The Shipbuilding Adjustment Board has already taken important steps in the direction of such standardization; and, in spite of the present difficulties, their progress will be greatly facilitated because the men with whom they are dealing are affiliated with unions whose "legitimacy" has been recognized on many occasions, notably at the recent national convention of the American Federation of Labor at Buffalo, by the President himself.

This important advantage is unfortunately absent from the industrial situation in the western lumber country upon which the government depends for aeroplane spruce. Public attention has been so closely concentrated upon the shipyards that the fact that our aircraft programme is not only running behind schedule but is also lagging far behind the disappointingly slow production of ships, goes unnoticed. "Liberty motors," which by this time the Aircraft Board had expected to be getting at the rate of one hundred a day, are actually being produced at something like one-tenth of this speed; and the spruce industry, according to the report just made to the President by Secretary Wilson's Mediation Commission, "is still in a state of seething unrest, wofully short of its full productivity."

When the Mediation Commission started out on their long journey last October, their primary objects were "to open the copper mines of Arizona to their maximum output, and to bring to pass such a condition in the labor situation in the Pacific northwest that the shipbuilding and aircraft programmes of the nation might proceed at the required pace and efficiency." They measurably succeeded in their first object by imposing collective agreements upon the copper industry of Arizona, and they were able to impose these agreements because in most of the copper camps they found unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor. Their second object, however, they missed completely. In their report to the President they explain this failure by saying that when their negotiations with the lumber operators of the Pacific northwest had reached a point where the adoption of the eight-hour day—the principal demand of the strikers—seemed imminent, "conferences between representatives of the Pacific Coast Lumbermen and officials in Washington, held contemporaneously with the session of the commission in Seattle, gave rise to advices from such representatives to their associates on the coast which led to a reversal of attitude and to insistence that the eight-hour day must go into operation for the entire country before the northwest Pacific coast would yield."

This, as a matter of fact, was not the basic reason for their failure; in Arizona they had found it possible to overcome the resistance of the mine operators to their imposed trade agreements. They failed in the lumber industry because the great majority of the lumber jacks belong to the I. W. W., and the commission, being committed to the American Federation of Labor, were as firmly set against any business dealings with this "outlaw" organization as conservative employers are obdurate against the recognition of "legitimate" unions. Had the lumber jacks been or-

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ganized into an A. F. of L. union, the Commission, if their policy in Arizona may be taken as a precedent, would have found it possible to establish a trade agreement between the lumber operators and their employees that would have restored industrial peace.

When the Commission reached the northwest, the I. W. W. had called off their open strike for the eight-hour day in favor of the "strike-on-the-job"—"sabotage through the conscientious withdrawal of efficiency," as they describe the various ingenious devices by which they contrive to do not more than eight hours' work in ten hour camps and mills. But the woods were full of rumors of another general strike to be called on the first of May unless in the interval the demand for the eight-hour day—the standard day on all direct government work—is granted. And if the government follows the precedent established by the Commission of refusing to negotiate with organized men not affiliated with recognized unions, there will be no way of averting the strike, and the production of necessary spruce will be further impeded.

But while the President's Mediation Commission was despairing of a solution of this problem short of "administrative action requiring the basic eight-hour day in all contracts for lumber entering into government work," another branch of the government by dealing with the I. W. W. as individuals and not as an organization had found a solution. During the summer, the agents of the United States Department of Agriculture in charge of the national forests in the northwest had mobilized a fire fighting force of ten thousand men in cooperation with I. W. W. leaders in Missoula, Montana, and Spokane, Washington. An employment agent of this important branch of the Federal service spent half of his time at I. W. W. headquarters, while some of the men stationed in the Federal building to cooperate in the mobilization of the fire fighting force were known to be members of the I. W. W. In the midst of this cooperation a number of the men who were giving most effective aid to the government in the protection of the national forests were arrested by agents of the United States Department of Justice for being members of an "outlaw" organization, and it was only through the extraordinary tact and patience of the District Forester that the fire fighting work, which depended upon free cooperation between the government and individual members of the I. W. W., was saved from disaster.

It is obvious that where unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor exist, the government should make the utmost use of them for the construction of an administrative machinery that will substitute negotiation and peaceful adjustment for strikes. In order to make this policy effective for the maintenance of uninterrupted production, the government will soon be compelled to transfer its recognition from individuals like Mr. Gompers to the principle of collective bargaining for which Mr. Gompers and the American Federation of Labor stand. Hitherto the government has generally made use of the machinery of the unions after strikes had occurred, and it has itself contributed to the development of strikes by failing to incorporate the principle of collective bargaining and standards of hours and wages in its contracts with private employers. It has leaned heavily upon the patriotism of the unions without giving them the explicit recognition which is essential to their effective cooperation.

But even if the government should take this necessary step, it would still have to devise a policy for the organization and protection of the many millions of workers who are not affiliated with the American Federation of Labor. It will have to establish national standards of hours, work and pay, and district industrial courts to enforce these standards before which all workers will be able to bring their grievances without prejudice because of their particular union or non-union affiliations. Everything must be done to strengthen the "legitimate" unions whose whole-hearted cooperation each day is proving more necessary to the successful prosecution of the war. But in that great field which lies beyond the influence of the American Federation of Labor, the government will sooner or later have to adopt and broaden the precedent so effectively established by the National Forest Service in the mobilization of its fire fighters last summer. Only through the adoption of such an inclusive policy can the adequate production of aeroplane spruce be assured.

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The African Riddle

The British Labor View

I WAS recently privileged to hear the views of one of those titled and influential ladies—with a general education at about the fifth standard level, plus a little French, German, Italian, and music—who do so much to make our England what it is at the present time, upon the Labor idea of an international control of "tropical" Africa. She was loud and derisive about the "ignorance" of Labor. "What can *they* know about foreign politics?" she said, with gestures to indicate her conception of *them*.

I was moved to ask her what she would do about Africa. "Leave it to Lord Robert!" she said, leaning forward impressively. "*Leave it to the people who know.*"

Unhappily I share the evident opinion of Labor that we are not blessed with any profoundly wise class of people who have definite knowledge and clear intentions about Africa, that those "people who know" are mostly a pretentious bluff, and so, in spite of a very earnest desire to take refuge in my "ignorance" from the burthen of thinking about African problems, like most other people I find myself obliged to do so. In the interests of our country, our children and the world, we common persons *have* to have opinions about these matters. A muddle-up in Africa this year may kill your son and mine in the course of the next decade. I know this is not a claim to be interested in things African such as that a promotor of a tropical railway or an oil speculator has; still it is a claim. And for the life of me I cannot see what is wrong about the Labor proposals or what alternative exists that can give even a hope of peace in and about Africa.

The gist of the Labor proposal is an international control of Africa between the Zambesi and the Sahara. This has been received with loud protests by men whose work one is obliged to respect, by Sir Harry Johnston for example and Sir Alfred Sharpe, and with something approaching a shriek of hostility by Mr. Cunningham Graham. But I think these gentlemen have not perhaps given the Labor proposal quite as much attention as they have spent upon the details of African conditions. I think they have jumped to conclusions at the mere sound of the word "international." There have been some gross failures in the past to set up international administrations in Africa and the near east. And these gentlemen think at once of some new Congo administration and of nondescript police forces commanded by Belgian, Swedish and Swiss adventurers. (See Joseph Conrad's Outpost of Civilization.) They think of internationalism with greedy Great Powers in the background outside the internationalized area, intriguing to create disorder and mischief with ideas of an ultimate annexation. But I doubt if such nightmares do any sort of justice to the Labor intention.

And the essential thing I would like to point out to these authorities upon African questions is that not one of them even hints at any other formula which covers the broad essentials of the African riddle.

What are these broad essentials? What are the ends that *must* be achieved if Africa is not to continue a festering sore in the body of mankind?

The first most obvious danger of Africa is the militarization of the black. General Smuts has pointed this out plainly. The Negro makes a good soldier; he is hardy, he stands the sea and he stands cold. (There was a Negro in the little party which reached the North Pole!) It is absolutely essential to the peace of the world that there should be no arming of the Negroes beyond the minimum necessary for the policing of Africa. But how is this to be watched and prevented if there is no overriding body representing civilization to say "Stop" to the beginnings of any such militarization? I do not see how Sir Harry Johnston, Sir Alfred Sharpe, and the other authorities, can object to at least an international African "Disarmament Commission" to watch, warn and protest. At least they must concede that.

But in practice this involves something else. A practical consequence of this disarmament idea must be an effective control of the importation of arms into the "tutelage" areas of Africa. That rat at the dykes of civilization, that ultimate expression of political scoundrelism, the gun runner, has to be kept under and stamped out in Africa as everywhere. A disarmament commission that has no forces available to prevent the arms trade will be just another Hague convention, just another vague, well intentioned, futile gesture.

And closely connected with this function of controlling the arms trade is another great necessity of Africa under "tutelage," and that is the necessity of a common collective agreement not to demoralize the native population. That demoralization, physical and moral, has already gone far. The whole Negro population of Africa is now rotten with diseases introduced by Arabs and Euro-

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peans during the last century, and such African statesmen as Sir Harry Johnston are eloquent upon the necessity of saving the blacks—and the baser whites—from the effects of trade gin and similar alluring articles of commerce. Moreover from Africa there is always something new in the way of tropical diseases, and presently Africa, if we let it continue to fester as it festers now, may produce an epidemic that will stand exportation to a temperate climate. A bacterium that may kill you or me in some novel and disgusting way may even now be developing in some Congo muck heap. So here is the need for another Commission to look after the Health of Africa. That too should be of authority over all the area of "tutelage" Africa. It is no good stamping out infectious disease in Nyassaland while it is being bred in Portuguese East Africa. And if there is a disarmament commission already controlling the importation of arms, why should not that body also control at the same time the importation of trade gin and direct quarantine and such like health regulations?

But there is another question in Africa upon which our "ignorant" Labor class is far better informed than our dear old eighteenth-century upper class which still squats so firmly in our Foreign and Colonial Offices, and that is the question of forced labor. We cannot tolerate any possibilities of the enslavement of black Africa. Long ago the United States found out the impossibility of having slave labor working in the same system with white. To cure that anomaly cost the United States a long and bloody war. The slave-owner, the exploiter of the black, becomes a threat and a nuisance to any white democracy. He brings back his loot to corrupt press and life at home. What happened in America in the midst of the last century between Federals and Confederates must not happen again on a larger scale between white Europe and middle Africa. Slavery in Africa, open or disguised, whether enforced by the lash or brought about by iniquitous land stealing, strikes at the home and freedom of every European worker—*and Labor knows this*. But how are we to prevent the enslavement and economic exploitation of the blacks if we have no general watcher of African conditions? We want a common law for Africa, a general Declaration of Rights, of certain elementary rights, and we want a common authority to which the black man and the native tribe may appeal for justice. What is the good of trying to elevate the population of Uganda and to give it a free and hopeful life if some other population close at hand is competing against the Uganda worker under lash and tax? So here is a third aspect of our international Commission, as a native protectorate and court of appeal!

There is still a fourth aspect of the African question in which every mother's son in Europe is closely interested, and that is the trade question. Africa is the great source of many of the most necessary raw materials upon which our modern comforts and conveniences depend; more particularly is it the source of cheap fat in the form of palm oil. One of the most powerful levers in the hands of the Allied democracies at the present time, in their struggle against the imperial brigands of Potsdam, is the complete control we have now obtained over these essential supplies. We can, if we choose, cut off Germany completely from these vital economic necessities, if she does not consent to abandon militant imperialism for some more civilized form of government. We hope that this war will end in that renunciation, and that Germany will re-enter the community of nations.

But whether that is so or not, whether Germany is or is not to be one of the interested parties in the African solution, the fact remains that it is impossible to contemplate a continuing struggle for the African raw material supply between the interested Powers. Sooner or later that means a renewal of war. International trade rivalry is indeed only war—*smouldering*. We need, and Labor demands, a fair, frank treatment of African trade, and that can only be done by some overriding regulative power, a Commission, which so far as I can see might also be the same Commission as that we have already hypothecated as being necessary to control the Customs in order to prevent gun-running and the gin trade. That Commission might very conveniently have a voice in the administration of the great waterways of Africa (which often run through the possessions of several Powers) and in the regulation of the big railway lines and air routes that will speedily follow the conclusion of peace.

Now this I take it is the gist of the Labor proposal. This—and no more than this—is what is intended by the "international control of tropical Africa." *I do not read that phrase as abrogating existing sovereignties in Africa.* What is contemplated is a delegation of authority. Everyone should know, though unhappily the badness of our history teaching makes it doubtful if everyone does know, that the Federal government of the United States of America did not begin as a sovereign government, and has now only a very questionable sovereignty. Each state is sovereign, and each state delegates certain powers to Washington. That is the root idea of the union. In the same way I understand the Labor proposal as meaning that we should delegate to an African Commission, the middle African customs, the regulation of

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inter-state trade, inter-state railways and waterways, quarantine and health generally, and the establishment of a Supreme Court for middle African affairs. One or two minor matters, such as the preservation of rare animals, might very well fall under the same authority. Upon that Commission the interested nations, that is to say—putting them in alphabetical order—the Africander, the Briton, the Belgian, the Egyptian, the Frenchman, the Italian, the Indian, the Portuguese—might all be represented in proportion to their interest. Whether the German would come in is really a question for the German to consider; he can come in as a good European, he cannot come in as an imperialist brigand. Whether too any other nations can claim to have an interest in African affairs, whether the Commission would not be better appointed by a League of Nations than directly by the interested governments, and a number of other such questions, need not be considered here. Here we are discussing only the main idea of the Labor proposal.

Now beneath the supervision and restraint of such a delegated Commission I do not see why the existing administrations of tutelage Africa should not continue. I do not believe that the Labor proposal contemplates any entire cession of European sovereignty. Under that international Commission the French flag may still wave in Senegal and the British over the protected state of Uganda. Given a new spirit in Germany I do not see why the German flag should not presently be restored in German East Africa. But over all, standing for righteousness, patience, fair play for the black, and the common welfare of mankind would wave a new flag, the Sun of Africa. That is my vision of the Labor project. It is something very different I know from the nightmare of an international police of cosmopolitan scoundrels in nondescript uniforms, hastening to loot and ravish his dear Uganda and his beloved Nigeria, which distresses the crumpled pillow of Sir Harry Johnston. But if it is not the solution then it is up to him and his fellow authorities to tell us what is the solution of the African riddle.

H. G. WELLS.

1918 or 1919?

SIR DOUGLAS HAIG'S long despatch reviewing the operations of last year up to but not including Cambrai lays the blame for the failure to break through on three causes—the weather, the defection of the Russians and the changes of the French plans. The weather is beyond our control but, if there is anything in the theory of cycles, this year may be quite as bad as last. The Russians no one can find it in his heart to blame for they have suffered terribly. The changes in the French plans, on the other hand, are a different story and to some extent a new story. General Haig's preference from the first was, it seems, for a British campaign in Flanders, and there is little room for doubt that if he had begun the attack on the Ypres ridge early enough in the year we should by this time have been in possession at any rate of the Belgian coast. By general consent our worst enemy in Flanders was not the Germans but the mud and the rain. General Haig's wish for a Flanders campaign was disturbed by the desire to cooperate with the French. The first understanding between Haig and Joffre was that we should attack between the Vimy Ridge and the Somme afterwards transferring our attention to the ridge east of Ypres. Very early, however, in 1917 Joffre was succeeded by Nivelle, and Nivelle's idea apparently was that the French should attack further south on the Craonne Plateau and Champagne. That meant that the British had to take over a further section of the French line. Presently General Nivelle's attacks became so costly that they had to be discontinued and General Pétain succeeded to the chief French command with an entirely new plan of operations. He did not believe in the strategic break-through, and his idea was to sit tight, economize his men and take chances when they offered. All this meant delay in the beginning of the British offensive in Flanders. We had to keep up the fighting on the Scarpe long after it promised to yield decisive results for the sake of helping the French, and so we began our Ypres offensive so late in the year that the bad weather came and spoiled it.

Such is General Haig's explanation of our disappointments in 1917. The chopping and changing of plans and the strategic cross purposes evident even between two such loyal allies as France and England, fully justify the argument of Mr. Lloyd George for the Inter-Allied Council. They explain too why some people were and still are anxious for a single command on the west front. "What we do" (their argument may be paraphrased) "doesn't matter so much, but at any rate let us all do the same thing." General Haig's explanation, however, candid as it is, can hardly be said to be complete. We must also allow for the effects of the sudden German retirement from the

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Somme just when our attack was going to begin and for the new defensive tactics of Lüdendorff which were, especially at first, very baffling. We must also add grave faults in the organization and the working of the British Headquarters staff. These were revealed unmistakably at Cambrai but it is not to be supposed that they came into existence then. They must have existed all along and have done much to weaken the effectiveness of our offensive. Evidently, reforms in the Headquarters staff will need to be very drastic, and there is already a stiff demand in England that the results of the Cambrai Enquiry should be made public. The reformers alike in the army and War Cabinet will not be strong enough to get their way unless public opinion behind them has a healthy kick.

But the gravest question suggested by the operations of 1917 is naturally not discussed by General Haig. It is this. If we could not do it in 1917 how are our chances likely to be better in 1918? The numbers of men withdrawn from the Russian front to the west have been much exaggerated but it would not be safe to reckon on a net increase of less than half a million men in the number of German effectives on the west. They will not all be in the front, of course, but at any rate they will be within call. In addition there are now considerable British and French armies in Italy, and their numbers will have to be kept up. Altogether we may have the equivalent of three quarters of a million men down by the spring of this year compared with the spring of last year. That is a very serious matter, for even in this last despatch General Haig is complaining of a shortage of troops. Against this adverse balance there is the American army to set, but it may be doubted whether with the best will in the world and under the most favorable circumstances it will possibly make the balance of numbers as favorable to us as it was last year. Here in brief is the military problem of the coming year. Unless our chances in the coming year are clearly better than they were last year, it is in the highest degree doubtful whether we ought to repeat the attempts to break through on the west this year.

It goes without saying that the cost of a continuous offensive such as the British army has kept up for almost eighteen months now is very heavy. No gross totals have been published, but the writer has heard relative estimates of the British losses in their various engagements which are perhaps worth giving. If the casualties in the Somme battle are represented by the figure four then our total casualties in the offensive of 1917 will be represented by the figure five of which two and a half goes to the account of the fighting east of Ypres, one and a half to the fighting east and south of Vimy and one to the rest including the Messines offensive. Despite the awful character of the fighting east of Ypres the casualty rates on the whole went down in 1917 as compared with the rates in the Somme battle. The Somme battle lasted for practically six months and the battles for 1917 for nine months. That is to say, although there was half as much fighting again in 1917 as in 1916 the casualties only went up by one quarter. We must be on our guard, therefore, against the exaggeration of the British casualties which the Germans are only too anxious to encourage. But, when all is said, the casualties in 1917 were far too high for the results achieved and we should not be justified in incurring them again for the same results. If the Pétain policy is to be adopted in 1918 on the west front—and as things are there are strong arguments in favor of that policy—it should be adopted not by one of the combatants but by all of them, simultaneously, not at different times, and of set and deliberate policy agreed upon at the earliest possible moment. The issue thus boils down to the title given to this article—"1918 or 1919?"

The writer's conclusion is that unless we can count on conditions being more in our favor this year than they were last we had better all adopt the Pétain policy of economizing men and fall back on the defensive in France for another year and let the Germans waste their man power if they think they can afford it. But if we are to fall back on the defensive let us do so whole-heartedly, making sure that we reap the advantages of the defensive. The adopting of the Pétain policy will certainly not mean that we are to do nothing at all this year except passively defend ourselves when the enemy attacks. Our object would be to inflict the maximum of losses on the enemy while suffering the minimum ourselves. Whenever we see a chance we should have offensives as Pétain has had, and experience has shown that the first day of a successful offensive is always the most costly to defender and the cheapest to the attacker. But such offensives would be limited in their objects; they would be local not general; and they would be designed to secure for the attack all the advantages of the first day without the drawbacks of persistence in the offensive on the following days. By this means we should hope to exhaust the enemy while all the time our own strength was growing and the armies from the United States were becoming stronger and stronger.

It is even conceivable that if the enemy's offensives failed and our forces grew as rapidly as we should hope, the enemy might not wait for the results of our general offensive in 1919 but might

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hasten to cut his losses and to make peace on the best terms that he could. However that might be, in addition to the advantage of saving casualties, we should gain time for reform of our military organization and the offensive in the air would of course be vigorously pressed all through the year. Such a system would require defenses comparable with those of the Germans, and these it is to be feared we have not yet got. Still if the Germans could make their Hindenburg lines between the end of the Somme battle and the beginning of their retreat we have as much time before us now as they had a year ago. Everything depends on our making up our mind early, knowing exactly what we propose to do and working unitedly for that one object.

Finally such a policy might enable us to economize sufficient men on the west to prosecute an offensive elsewhere—in Turkey for example—where our chances of decisive success this year are much better. And after all it is not absolutely certain that Germany will not this year as in other years make her chief offensive in the east.

H. SIDEBOTHAM.

A Legislature that Works

NO doubt the farmers of the nearer northwest will feel renewed confidence in the National Non-Partisan League, because of the special legislative session just terminated in North Dakota. An economic condition of great seriousness to the agricultural population of that state has been relieved with a directness and thoroughness too seldom apparent in the work of American lawmaking bodies.

The condition which prevailed was the culmination of two successive crop failures in the western and central portions of the state. In 1916 the wheat crop, the main dependence of the farmers in meeting their obligations, was destroyed by black rust. In 1917 all the crops, including even those raised for feeding, were almost completely a failure in this region on account of drouth. In some localities the loss was total. In others a small fraction of the normal crop was harvested. The result of these two bad years has been to drive most of the farmers of the newer parts of the state to the end of their resources in the matter of credit. Their land, purchased with borrowed money in most cases, has been remortgaged to the limit of its value, and their personal property has been made the basis for yet additional credit. Many North Dakota farmers face the nation's need for increased production in 1918 with their land, their horses and cattle, even their implements, mortgaged to the last dollar of their value; without seed grain; and with their feed almost exhausted now, in midwinter, and wholly inadequate for the heavy demands of the spring work. On account of war conditions most retail stores in the states have been placed upon a cash basis, and as a result many farmers are compelled to sell their scanty supplies of grain in order to buy groceries and clothing for their families. These men realize that the nation needs a maximum wheat crop this year. Usually North Dakota raises one-seventh of the country's wheat, and the farmers of the state are anxious to do their full share in 1918. But to seed an increased or even a normal acreage they must have both seed grain for sowing and feed for their work horses; and thousands lack both, and have absolutely nothing to offer in exchange for them except liens on the unsowed crop.

Clearly, an extension of credit for these needy farmers was a necessity if they were to be enabled to do their share in the war work of the year, or even in many cases if they were to be enabled to hold their farms and preserve themselves from ruin. The local banks were unable to meet the situation for the reason that most of the farmers needing relief were already owing them fully as much as good banking will permit. The North Dakota State Council of Defense, meeting with a representative of the State Bankers' Association, received from him the frank admission that the banks were unable to furnish the relief which was necessary.

The next possible source of help to be appealed to was the Federal government. The Department of Agriculture, the National Council of Defense, and other Federal agencies have rightly done all in their power to make the farmers of the nation realize the responsibility which rests upon them for increased production, especially of wheat, in 1918. But when the farmers appealed for an appropriation of fifty million dollars, to be used in relieving conditions in large portions of the Middle West similar to those which obtained in North Dakota, they were met with temporizing and delay, and finally with the admission on the part of the Secretary of Agriculture and others in the confidence of the administration in Washington that the bill seems unlikely to pass. The Department of Agriculture has a revolving fund of six million dollars for the purchase of seed, but this operates on a strictly cash basis and hence would not help the needy North Dakota grain growers. Assistance from the Federal land banks was equally out of the question. The North Dakota farmers believe that the land banks are a step in the right direction and will ultimately result in an improvement in the conditions of rural credit. But

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most of the farmers involved in the present crisis could not take advantage of the land bank law's provisions, because their most pressing obligations are short-time chattel mortgages which could not be converted into land bank paper. Their present need is for added credit, rather than for better terms in that which they already have. The few farmers who might be helped by the land banks fear their operation as too dilatory and uncertain to be trusted for assistance in the approaching seeding season.

Despairing of adequate relief for the state from Federal sources, Linn J. Frazier, the "peoples' governor" elected by the farmers through the agency of the Non-Partisan League, summoned the state legislature to consider the seed and feed situation and other war-time emergencies. This, the second extraordinary session in the history of the state, convened on January twenty-third. Within three days the house of representatives, in which the Non-Partisan League farmers have a large majority, had completed its business and asked for adjournment. But the senate, where the forces in opposition to the League are still in control, prolonged the session until the rising tide of public opinion throughout the state led to a sudden change of tactics.

The measure adopted to relieve the seed and feed situation will enable the counties where need exists to issue bonds and lend the proceeds to the farmers on their personal notes, payable at harvest time. The amount allowed each farmer will be decided by the county commissioners on the basis of affidavits as to the number of acres he will seed and the amounts of seed and feed he has on hand. The State Commissioner of Agriculture will supervise the distribution of seed to the counties where it is needed, seeing to it that pure seed is furnished to the farmers at the lowest possible cash prices. Although the amount of obligation any county can assume in such ways is limited constitutionally to five per cent of the assessed valuation of its property, the act will make from six to seven million dollars available in the districts where relief is needed. Those who have studied the situation regard this sum as fully adequate to relieve even the present serious need.

It is worthy of note that although the need for relief is entirely limited to the western and central portions of the state the farmers from the eastern legislative districts voted for the bonding measure with perfect readiness. Manifestly the farmer legislators are working for the agricultural interests of the state as a whole, and are remarkably innocent of the petty local jealousies so familiar in legislative assemblies. They voted for the seed and feed act as a matter of helpfulness to their brother farmers, and as a matter of state and national patriotism.

These North Dakota farmers who make up the minority in the state senate and the majority in the house are in striking contrast to the common type of state legislator. Law-making is a serious business to them. They go about it with extreme earnestness. Long before the appointed time for the house to be called to order most of them are in their seats, studying gravely and diligently the printed bills which the pages lay on their desks. They demand that the bored and supercilious chief clerk read and reread a proposed amendment word by word, while they struggle painfully to grasp the full intent of the legal phraseology. For the most part they speak only to vote. They came to Bismarck on the occasion of this special session to do a definite thing, convinced of the needfulness of doing that thing both by their own knowledge of farm conditions and by the proclamation of their farmer governor, in whom they have implicit faith. When they had done this thing nothing else occurred to them. They looked with marked disfavor on the conduct of the senate which kept them longer away from their barns and stock, the care of which in the severe winter weather had been temporarily entrusted to wives, children and hired men. When the legislature was not in session they gathered in groups in the lobbies of the Capitol or of the hotels, still quiet, still earnest.

The evening caucuses of the Non-Partisan League members, which were instituted at the last session for the purpose of training the inexperienced legislators in the rudiments of law-making, were continued at this session, but with the difference that they were no longer secret. Committee hearings were held in these caucuses, at which members of the opposition appeared to urge their views on certain questions. They were heard courteously and attentively. At one session of the caucus the State Commissioner of Agriculture spoke to the farmers on the labor situation in North Dakota, urging early hiring of labor for the whole season, and the adoption of a just and uniform standard of hours and wages for agricultural work. Wives and daughters of legislators, and farmers not officially connected with the session in any way, were present in large numbers both at the caucuses and in the galleries of the legislative halls. Manifestly the agricultural population of North Dakota was interested in the work of the session.

These farmer legislators and their farmer constituents feel with great unanimity that effective relief of the seed and feed crisis of the present winter would have been unobtainable under the old political regime. Rightly or wrongly, they ascribe

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the present solution to the beneficent influence of the Non-Partisan League. The history of the special session will confirm their belief in the League's doctrine of "legislation for farmers by farmers." Probably it will have an effect as well in other states of the farther Middle West, where the League is already gaining a foothold, and where in some cases the farmers are appealing to state and nation in vain, under conditions similar to those which prevailed in North Dakota, for the means wherewith to do their patriotic duty.

JOHN T. FREDERICK.

Wasting Less Food

The Food Administration—V

GOLF was described by a despairing novice as a series of difficult feats performed with instruments not at all adapted to the purpose. And that is an equally good description of Mr. Hoover's efforts to stimulate conservation in the consumption of foodstuffs. For an enormously difficult feat his only instruments have been appeals and exhortations. There is food wasted by the retailers' methods of distribution. The Food Administration has no legal control over the retailer. There is food wasted in public eating places. Mr. Hoover can only write earnest letters of protest. There is food wasted by being put into such non-essentials as confections. Mr. Hoover can only tabulate the losses. There is food wasted in private homes. The Administration has no programme other than the request for voluntary co-operation. In this case voluntary methods are probably more effective then they are in the other cases, just as they seem more appropriate. It is in dealing with the retail store, the public eating place and the non-essential industry that the poor instruments of appeal and exhortation show up as most ineffective.

They would have been of no use at all, these instruments, without the aid of an expert publicity. And accordingly the first task of the Food Administration, in attacking the problem of conservation, was to create for itself an energetic and versatile publicity office.

Posters, the magazines and the moving picture theatre have all been used; but by far the greatest assistance has come from the newspapers. I have in my hand a copy of the Topeka Daily Capital for February 9th. That was an ordinary week day. The paper contains four different articles on the importance of conservation and production in foodstuffs. All of them are interesting reading and effective propaganda. And the propaganda is not confined to the news columns. On page nine there is the advertisement of a dealer in meats, to whose private interest it is for you to buy prodigally, and who nevertheless urges you to "Serve Just Enough" and "Use all Left-Overs." In the space above him a baker calls your attention to his oatmeal bread, his war buns and his bran cakes—"all made under the new government regulations." At the left the Forbes Milling Company reports that within a few days winners in the "Corn Bread Recipe Contest" will be announced. And on the following page the Royal Bakery invites you to "Eat Over-the-Top War Bread and do your bit"—guaranteeing that once you have tried it you will freely and of your own accord constitute every day in the week a wheatless one.

There is nothing out of the ordinary about Topeka or the Topeka Daily Capital. This is an issue picked up from among many newspapers in the office of one of the Food Administration executives. And the executive whose job it is to keep track of what the newspapers do with food propaganda regards this issue as a fair sample. The newspapers, and the bakers and dealers via the newspapers, have recognized that the food conservation programme would fail unless it had the best publicity. They have been helped to that conclusion by the number and the skill of the many writers and advertising men who volunteered their services to the Administration. And these men have not been bound to a rigid programme. No central office has manufactured press copy that might be satisfactory in Massachusetts but would be out of tune in Wyoming. State agents of the Administration have been free to work with individual ideas. Successful propaganda is interchanged between states. Warnings are issued of schemes that have failed. It is an easy system that encourages local initiative. And that it is often effective is shown in the way it has induced a retailer in Topeka, Kansas, to plead with his own customers to "Serve Just Enough" and "Use all Left-Overs." These are not slogans that an enterprising dealer spontaneously advertises.

Publicity, the Food Administration's only weapon, has no doubt done a good deal to promote conservation. Mr. Hoover estimates that the American people have saved at least thirty million bushels of wheat during the past five months. What has been saved in meats and other staples it is hard to gauge. The best index for such figures,

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it appears, is the amount of grease recovered from food that has been thrown away as refuse. The less grease, presumably the less wastage in consumption. And here the few available figures are encouraging. In thirteen cities, totaling six million people, less than sixty per cent as much grease was recovered in the month of December, 1917, as in the same month a year ago. Incidentally it is an illuminating comment on the orderliness of American private industry to note that a food administrator's only way of gauging national thrift is to check up the outputs of reduction plants.

Whatever the savings accomplished by appeals and exhortations, it is apparent that the future will make even sharper demands for conservation. The shipping situation is not relieved. The recent breakdown of private railway control, together with a series of severe storms, set back the Food Administration's programme. Until this breakdown the Administration had been able to count on an average of twelve days for a carload of grain to reach the seaboard. Even at that rate there was room for worry. But the last comprehensive report that Mr. Hoover received showed that it was now taking an average of ninety days for those carloads to reach the coast. That was a report on nineteen hundred cars—and it meant, from the viewpoint of the theoretical ships waiting to receive the grain, a loss by delay of almost fourteen thousand carloads. So chaotic was domestic transportation that grain was actually being sent to Europe via Seattle and the Panama Canal. Whatever Federal control can do for the railroads, the Food Administration now has a mighty handicap to overcome. Inroads have been made on its reserves on the Atlantic seaboard.

And it is surely obvious that if this handicap is to be overcome, and if, quite aside from that matter, this country is to play a more honorable part in feeding the Allied world, the weak instrument of appeal and exhortation must be reinforced by other and more compelling agencies. In three ways Mr. Hoover's hand must be strengthened; strengthened, in the first place, by a power of supervision over the food served in public eating places. If there is not food enough for the poor, in a time of peace, it is infamous to permit the hotels to cater to the capricious wastefulness of the rich. In a time of war, when the whole world is on rations, to permit the hotels and cafés to run on a loose system of exploitation is not only infamous but ridiculous. There is pending in Congress a bill which would give the Food Administration powers of control over the menus and methods of the public eating places, which use a fifth of our entire food supply regularly. It will be passed if the newspapers continue to give Mr. Hoover their fine support, despite the fact that he is reaching more dangerous ground.

In the second place, the Food Administration must be equipped with powers of supervision over the retailers, in order that all classes and localities may fare more nearly alike and in order, as Mr. Hoover puts it, that the foodstuffs we send the Allies may as little as possible be " drawn from that class to which economy and moderate use is a daily necessity." Against this programme there is just one argument that can be made. It is the argument that people in our own land who have been trained to command luxuries should, with the world starving, continue to command luxuries for the sole reason that they have had the good fortune to have enjoyed them in the past. Congressmen who choose to make use of this argument against an extension of powers to the Food Administration will deserve to be called to account for it, in the November elections.

Finally, most important, Mr. Hoover must be supplied with the authority to keep foodstuffs, and materials necessary to foodstuffs, from being wasted in non-essentials. Take the case of ammonia. Ammonia is needed to maintain the storage warehouses in which must be kept from time to time more than a half billion dollars' worth of food stocks. It is also needed by the army and the navy in the making of explosives. And there is, at the present moment, an absolute shortage in ammonia of sixty million pounds per annum. So what do we do with our available supply? We let it, generously, be used for such war activities as the cold storage of furs and the upkeep of skating rinks. We have experienced, also, a shortage in sugar. Candy factories have been running uninterruptedly. We shall experience a shortage in tin, so acute a shortage that we shall not be able to ship essential canned food to the Allies. Meantime there are tin boxes and tinfoil wrappings being wasted on a thousand petty luxuries. There is scarcely a limit to our reverence for the sanctity of private business interests.

Mr. Hoover comes out flatly and asks Congress for power to keep essential materials away from non-essential manufactures. It is no easy popular request to make. But it is the honorable request of an executive who will not dodge a responsibility. With purely voluntary methods Mr. Hoover has done as much for conservation as he can. As a rule the individual homekeeper has helped him. But the unorganized distribution of the retailer, the wastefulness of the hotel, and the flourishing prosperity of the non-essential industry demand that he be extended further authority. Let Congress challenge his right to that authority if it chooses to accept the responsibility for its action.

CHARLES MERZ.

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Smith, Smoke, and the War

IN our club it is not Jones the tobacco conserver, but Smith the smokeless. Ever since I have been on the house committee Smith has been troublesome, though not acutely so until a short time ago. Up to some months after our entrance into the war he was really well thought of, for a man who did not smoke. Before the war, he did nothing worse than to circulate a petition once a year or so. Old-timers tell me he began it almost as soon as he got into the club. It was always the same, and read like this: "The undersigned, knowing that they would take comfort in and believing that others could have no good ground for objection to a room where no smoking is allowed, respectfully request that you take steps to supply the club with such a room." Five or six men signed the earlier petitions, but the number dwindled. I guess this was because the house committee, if I do say it, always did exactly the right thing. We always answered the same thing, namely, that only a small minority of the club wanted such a room, and that the majority were opposed to any action limiting the absolute freedom of the members. This we said in our formal response. To each other we said that it served Smith right; if he didn't like smoke, he ought to learn to smoke, so that he would like it: it was perfectly simple and easy; a nausea or two, and there you were, ready to enjoy life like a social being. At times somebody went farther and said that men like Smith really had no business in the club, and should be made to feel it. Once we recalled having heard it reported that Smith had said that as a mere common-sense proposition he didn't believe in smoking; it didn't stand to reason that nicotine made a man healthier or more efficient, or in any way a more valuable member of society; quite the contrary. We didn't like this I-am-holier-than-thou attitude of his. On the whole, however, we agreed that it was wise to tolerate his unpleasant ways for the sake of his fifty dollars dues—and the assessments.

But, as I said, Smith didn't become really troublesome until after our entrance into the war. Even then, none of us suspected, until last month, the length to which he could go. We were having a meeting of the membership, for open discussion of Ways to Win the War. As we were all either beyond the military age or exempt, the talk was mostly about economy. The air was beautifully filled with smoke from really good articles whose sale for the evening we had counted on; everybody thought of the revenue he was bringing to his club and his country, and smoked hard. Of course there were no pipes; our club is a gentleman's club. We have even been called highbrows, which we take really as a compliment. It isn't like being called highbrows in the cultural sense.

The talk was good. It always is in our club. Everybody had something to say, and said it as amply as the desire of the next speaker to gain a hearing would allow. Of course there was a great deal said about meatless, wheatless, heatless, sugarless and butterless days and meals. Various pledges were circulated, and everybody signed them all without hesitation. Our club has been noted ever since the beginning of the war for its leadership in suggestions and the signing of pledges. There was a great deal said about heat in particular. Somebody suggested making the club a heatless club by running it on the open-air principle, like the open-air schools. A member who was in the rooming-house business startled the assemblage by calling attention to the amount of coal wasted through unnecessary ventilation. People had become faddish about fresh air the past few years, he said. He proposed a "Keep-the-window-shut" movement, and started it by passing around a pledge to this effect: "We, the undersigned, believing that hot air will win the war, pledge ourselves individually and collectively not to ventilate our rooms as long as the exterior temperature is below 75° Fahrenheit." This brought on a battle of words. A half dozen fresh air cranks were over the top in less than a second. Unaerated rooms were worse than even autocracy, they cried. Furious smoking for the next ten minutes showed how wrought up they were. After some time, the pledge was amended to read "not to ventilate unnecessarily," and everybody signed.

Smith was present, and visibly affected by the smoke. He was opposite me, and only eight feet off, and I could catch glimpses of his face occasionally as he tried to blow the smoke away. I nudged Brown, and we enjoyed Smith's tearful eyes and gasping, as we had often before on similar occasions. Serves him right, we both thought.

At last Smith reached up behind him and sneakingly pried the window open about half an inch. The cold air made a little swirl in the smoke, and we could see Smith draw in a long breath before he sat down. Nobody noticed but Brown and me, until Black, who sat next to Smith, either felt the coolness of the fresh air or detected its odor. I don't know why pure air should be so offensive to the nostrils of a smoker, but the fact remains that it is; he can endure it on a sleeping-porch at 10° below, and it is theoretically indispensable to him at all times, but your real smoker cannot endure it mingled with his smoke. Time and time again I have been made almost ill by some man like Smith opening a window and letting in fresh air. Black glared at Smith, and shivered and coughed. In

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a minute or so two others who had noticed called out, "Shut that window!" grumbling afterward that they hadn't come to the meeting to catch cold, and didn't propose to sit by and see fuel wasted either.

Smith was on his feet before the grumbling ceased. He anticipated Black and slammed the window. "Yes," he grouched, with that non-smoker's look of prejudice all over his face, "yes, I'll shut it, but I'm bound to tell you something plain before I sit down. I must say, I don't understand the working of your minds. You brag of depriving your children of candy, not to say a decent allowance of sugar, you pledge to keep them in rooms at 50° with the windows never opened, you call on your wives to practice all sorts of impossible economies in the kitchen, you are for winning the war by saving a spoonful of sugar or an ounce of fat or a slice of bread a meal or a degree of heat an hour, and here you are, burning up in one evening twenty-five to fifty dollars of tobacco in the gratification of a useless and injurious habit. You are for saving by closing or underheating rooms and churches and schools, but I haven't heard a word tonight about saving on tobacco. You cry out about the lack of land for food production, and you want us to plow up lawns and boulevards and parks, but I haven't heard a word about lessening in any way the one-sixth of our total vegetable-raising area that is given over to tobacco.

"You spend nearly a billion and a half dollars a year on your habit, and meet here to complain that people don't economize and put their savings into liberty bonds. You complain of indifference to starving Belgian babies and French orphans—it won't be long before it will be American orphans too—and you keep on spending from one to two hundred dollars a year on smoke. You are in a panic over transportation and coal, but you all keep on with an extra coach on every train for your habit, and an extra room in every station. I might complain of a club with plenty of space that will not give me and a dozen other faithful members out of its abundance a place to breathe in, but I don't. What I do complain of is your blind, complacent, presumptuous, egotistical inconsistency. If you really mean anything by all your talk about economy, why not prove it by a little practice on your own part where it hurts, instead of only inventing schemes and pledges that depend on your wives for execution? I'm going to give you a chance myself, right now. I believe in action. I'm going to circulate a pledge calling for one smokeless day a week on the part of both the club as a whole and all its members individually, besides a daily reduction of——"

At this point a number of men who had at last recovered the wits and the breath that Smith had astonished out of them yelled, "Sit down!" Everybody else joined in. Smith had to sit down. At first we thought he would resign and go elsewhere, but on second thought we felt reassured. Fortunately, there are no clubs in town where the rooms are smokeless, except the Women's Club, and that, in spite of its boasted democracy, has not yet made provision for male members. We are in no danger of losing Smith's fifty dollars—and his share in the assessments.

But it will be some time before Smith regains even the imperfect measure of esteem and confidence he enjoyed before. However, as Brown and I have often agreed, if a man persists in being unreasonable, he has nobody to blame but himself.

GRANT SHOWERMAN.

CORRESPONDENCE

Efficient and Liberal Democracy

SIR: Please accept my sincere thanks for your comment upon my recent letter. At the risk of seeming to demand an undue share of your time and space I am venturing a reply.

You are familiar with the pithy saying that words are as often veils as they are vehicles of thought. Possibly I laid myself open to the charge that in my eyes "the President and the Secretary of War are good safe Democrats," and to looking at the whole matter from "the standpoint of personal and party prestige." As a matter of fact I am not a "good Democrat." I am not interested in party prestige, as such. I am interested in the prestige of liberalism.

I am scarcely ready to deny the existence of inefficiency. To tell the truth, I am, in my own profession, too often in exasperating contact with it. I would be ready to admit that probably the Federal government has its share of the inefficiency which is, or at least has been, inseparable from our blatant individualism. But I would ask you one or two more questions upon the matter of criticism: First, do you think that the President and his cabinet do not see the lack of coordination? Second, if they do, is it possible that they were waiting for public criticism to disarm the strong influence in Congress which was sure to oppose a real move for increased efficiency? Was it necessary for this criticism to take the form of an attack on them, rather than on the system itself?

I note with considerable gratification that your issue of February 9th contains an article by Mr. H. G. Wells, in which he takes for his thesis a certain point upon which I insisted in my letter, that the real obstruction—I mean obstruction behind methods—is the imperialism in our own country. In your comment on my letter you did not discuss this point. I would be highly gratified by one of your illuminating editorials upon it.

In reply to your "obvious retort" that my letter was an argument for "saving democracy at home at the expense of its fortunes in the present war," my only answer is that it does not seem to me that any such choice is put before us.

I wish I could believe that your distinction between "organization of production" and "ruthless and inhuman mechanical efficiency" is a real difference. I have a faith

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that it might be, in a democracy where the great majority was capable of always solving its difficulties in the light of intelligence informed by the broadest humanitarianism. But looking abroad over the civilized world as it is now, or even as it seems in a fair way to be after the war, is not the great majority of our leaders of thought and finance looking toward mechanical efficiency as the shining goal to be attained by the nation's newly awakened power? A few courageous sheets, such as the New Republic, for example, are preaching quite another idea of efficiency, a real democratic efficiency, but that is not the kind which constitutes part of the daily mental pabulum of the mass of the people, do you think? The anti-democratic forces in all countries are the efficient forces. I do not mean that autocracy and efficiency cannot possibly be divorced, but it seems to me that the fact remains that in the minds of eminently successful business men they seem to be consciously or unconsciously associated. And in organizing production these are the men who have to be depended upon, for they are the only ones who have the ability required. Speaking now of the majority of them, do you believe that the country could depend upon them to work wholeheartedly for a form of democracy in which they do not believe? Briefly, does not this seemingly inevitable association of illiberalism with what most people understand by efficiency have its foundation in the very arrangement of the universe itself?

I would be glad if you considered these questions which I have raised as worthy of more extended discussion, viz., how to make and keep our democracy materially efficient, and yet keep it liberal?

C. L. VESTAL.

Chicago, Illinois.

A Labor View of the Shipbuilding Programme

[Editors' note: A friend of the New Republic, who is thoroughly familiar with our shipbuilding plants and who has given much time to conversation with the workers employed in them, recently secured from one of the men a statement of the workers' point of view that is typical and extremely illuminating. We publish it as an illustration of what we are losing in national efficiency through our failure to win the active interest of the workers, whose morale is as essential to our success as that of our men in line of battle. In our shipyards we have relied on the cash nexus alone to hold our men to the work. If we want more workmen we raise the pay, but we do nothing to improve general conditions of life so as to counteract the tendencies toward irregularity of effort that are not excluded by high pay. Worst of all, we have not made the workers understand how dependent the nation is upon their cooperation.]

I AM twenty-four years of age, born in America. My parents, American before me, lived their lives in a city on the Atlantic Coast. My father before 1914 had been spasmodically employed in a shipyard. My life until I was sixteen was that of the boys of my class. After that I went to work as did other boys in the town. I spent my days at the shipyard, when they had ships to build, which was probably but half the time. I remember the old man saying, "Ships could only be built for river and coastwise service because they built them so cheaply abroad that American yards could not compete."

The first three years I worked as heater boy, starting at seven in the morning. My job was to keep a small hand-heating furnace supplied with rivets; I had to pick them up from an old keg with a pair of tongs. They had to be turned over and over, thoroughly heated until each little rivet was red hot. In cold weather my knuckles were often barked and frequently burned. The air hose froze if the air was wet, and part of my job was to keep the hose thawed at the manifold where four or five lines ran out.

Heaters were located without regard to weather conditions. Most of the time I was hot in front and freezing to death at my back. Nearly all winter I had a cold from wet feet and exposure.

After a while I took a job as passer, and as the new heater boy heated the rivets, I took them up in the nip of a pair of long handled tongs and tossed them up to the "holder-on." This was not much better as to comfort, but it paid more and I was one of the "men," which meant something to a youngster, and it gave me a chance to bawl out the heater boy. Morning and evening I had no greater pleasure than to encourage these boys to stamp their time cards two or three times instead of once, so that the time-keeper would have something to do getting the hours straight.

Bill Riley, my holder-on, had floated all over the Atlantic Coast and had put in a good part of his time on the Lakes where they launch ships on the bias—sideways. As long as I had been around regularly, I always got a good piece of work from the foreman—it paid to stand in with him.

A little over two years ago I married, and even though work was not rushed and other shops looked good I stuck to the old yard. I worked up to be a riveter now and everybody said ships was needed, so after talking it over I would not change. In the plant we worked as soon as the frames and plates were bolted on—because you know that's what the bolters-up do—they bring the frames from the shops all ready to set up, looking like big hockey sticks. They hold them in place with the overhead crane until they can put in a few bolts to hold the plates already punched and reamed. Reaming is what they call paring out the edge of a hole so that the rivet head will come flush. Just as soon as this was done we all looked for an inside job where we could sit down when the foreman wasn't looking. Even if we were getting piecework rates, there wasn't any need of hurrying.

About this time we learned from the papers that the country was going to war with Germany. The ships we had been working on were for foreign account, and now we heard they belonged to the government. Up at the hall where the union met once a week we were told to do just enough to keep things going, but not to rush. "Just drag and we'll get you more pay," is what the leader said, and what they said seemed to be true, for when we put up a howl we would get more money without half trying. So Bill and I often said, "What's the use? If we drive too many rivets today, tomorrow we'll get hell for lettin' up. All this talk about needin' ships is bunk—anyway, we've got to be shown." All the time the foreman was hollering for speed, and soon we got to getting bonus for all rivets over a day's drive of 300. Some days we could drive 600, and many a week we took down $150.00 for Bill and me, besides what the passer and boy got—it takes four to make a gang.

Well, we just got to getting so much money that nearly all the boys would knock off two days a week, because we made enough in four days to give the Missus and still

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have plenty left. Sometimes we would knock off Saturday and work Sunday, as that was double time pay. One time I met one of those bohicks that are in the yard. It was Wednesday and I hadn't seen him at work. I said, "John, why ain't you workin'?" He smiles and says, "Got $60.00 Saturday; give the woman $30.00, and still got $20.00 left. I got to spend it next few days, then me work."

On the next Friday it was raining when we rang in at seven, and as it didn't stop in half an hour the gang decided we didn't need to work, so we went out. The foreman said it would clear, but we weren't needing a weather prophet, so we staid out and spent the day watching some kids play ball on a lot.

All the time, even though food was costing more and rent was getting higher, we figured that the rich men were getting richer out of the war, so we might as well get it, too.

As for floaters, why you couldn't tell what minute a gang would split up. Those who weren't married and could move, were traveling all the time, just from one yard to another, and didn't have to give references, either. The yards were bidding against one another, and while we heard that the officials wouldn't stand for it, the foremen took their orders with a wink and we got raises without asking for them. All of a sudden the government at Washington stepped into the game, and then we thought we'd sure be up against it, because it looked as if ships were needed, but Bill and I couldn't see any change. Some of the fellows were drafted and taken to the camps, but that didn't mean anything to us. All we could read said ships were needed, but we didn't see any rush. Often we said to each other, "If they're in such a hurry, why doesn't Uncle Sam come in here and say so? It must be hot air, and as long as we got ours—why should I worry?"

P. T. C.

Cottage or Tenement?

SIR: Apropos of Mr. Henry Atterbury Smith's letter which appeared under the caption "The Multi-Family Dwelling," I had assumed in Mr. Smith's long fight for a certain type of multi-family dwelling, the open-stair tenement, that his object was to produce, under the existing economic conditions and accepted (tolerated) standards of living, a better type of tenement house. His obstacle has been the Tenement House law against which there is no appeal.

I believe that he has evolved a better type of "tenement house"; I agree that without the possibilities of appeal in legislation of this sort there can be little progress. But if examined in relation to an ideal or a rational environment the multi-family dwelling (group of cells superimposed one above the other) must be classed as a contrivance. Mr. Smith has proposed and advocated a better contrivance—that is all. The fundamental issue is this: What does the average family really desire in the way of a home? Is it a few rooms in a multi-family structure and a garden plot located somewhere adjacent? Or is it a complete environment wherein can be gratified the idiosyncrasies of personality, and where the mother can keep a watchful eye upon the children as they play in the yard or garden adjacent?

Is the multi-family contrivance the expression of an ideal, is it an expression of progress or is it really nothing more than the architectural form which has been squeezed out by the powerful, relentless pressure of so-called "economic" forces pressing against our unorganized methods of achieving our ideals? Mr. Smith assumes that those who have sought to awaken America to the value of Great Britain's wartime home building policy as a means of achieving maximum production desire to transplant British policies, British forms and British ideals. There is no valid reason why we should not adopt the British policy as regards organization and action; for it works. Forms were used to make the result of the policy more vivid; let us accept them as an expression of thoroughness (no reference here to national areas).

The effort of Great Britain to house her munitions workers in cottages, her programme of reconstruction which contemplates the like provision for every worker in Great Britain, the general policy in time completely to eliminate the slum and the tenement houses, may be nothing more than a peculiar British notion. Such a programme of purpose existed before the war; the war has emphasized its value; it is becoming a reality. The masses have not been "numbed to accept what was provided." This new programme and the forms express what they want, what they are to have. It is true, as Mr. Smith suggests, that these new social standards are British. They are for the moment British because as yet we are not sufficiently awake to make them American.

FREDERICK L. ACKERMAN.

New York City.

Excessive Control

SIR: The piece printed in your issue of January 26th, under the caption of The Deeper Malady, is an able setting forth of the theory now widely accepted that the "non-essential industries" should be prohibited or curbed by legal regulation as a war measure.

Quite aside from the extreme difficulty of determining what is, or is not "essential," is it not possible that we are even now suffering from excessive regulation of industry?

The railways—though they have accomplished much—could have done more had they been sufficiently equipped; and may not their lack be attributed largely to the "regulation" under which they have suffered for so many years?

You would prohibit the making, say of jewelry, that the jeweller might be free to work in a fuse factory. If the jeweller be needed in the fuse factory, is it more efficient to put him out of his job first, and trust him to find the right work after days or weeks—perhaps months of idleness, or to let him be drawn into the fuse factory, without the waste of a day, by its offer of a higher wage—more hours of work or other advantages.

On the very next page of the New Republic you complain of a lack of farm labor, "drawn away by booming industrial enterprises." This means nothing if not that labor flows toward higher wages. But what is to prevent the farmer from entering the competition for labor enough to give us the increased acreage we need this year? Is it not possible that fear of a maximum as well as a minimum price for wheat deters him, especially as he cannot contract in advance for his labor?

Regulation is not new. But it seems strange to find in a book printed before the civil war this passage, which might have been written yesterday:

"In the case of Corn laws, all that was done was to repeal the old laws and leave trade to its natural freedom. When this great reform was accomplished the only result was to place things on the same footing as if legislators

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had never interfered at all. . . . If we examine the policy of the most humane and enlightened governments we shall find this to be the course they have pursued. The whole scope and tendency of modern legislation is to revert things to that natural channel from which the preceding legislation had drawn them. . . . Instead of leaving the national industry to take its own course, it has been troubled by an interminable series of regulations, all intended for its good, all inflicting serious harm. . . . We find laws to regulate wages; laws to regulate prices; laws to regulate profits; laws to regulate interest on money. . . . A system organized and strictly enforced, of interference with markets; interference with manufactories; interference with machinery; interference even with shops. . . . It is unnecessary to say that these remarks do not affect the real service rendered to society by every tolerably organized government. In all countries a power of punishing crime and of framing laws must reside somewhere; but the accusation which the historian is bound to bring against every government which has hitherto existed is that it has overstepped its proper functions and at each step has done incalculable harm."

Putting aside any of the arguments based on the necessity of smooth running business and the making of profits in order to float loans, it is an undeniable fact that labor must not be wasted nor plants disorganized if we are to get maximum production. Yet prevention of manufacture does waste labor and disorganize plants, while the law of supply and demand, if allowed to work unobstructedly, shifts labor and machinery with little loss or disorganization from fields in which they are not needed into fields in which they are.

Granted that the difficulties under which many industries are now operating (whether or not it was "regulation" that caused them) require heroic measures, is it not rather positive than negative treatment, more freedom rather than more restriction that will cure them?

As for restrictions on consumption—what could be more effective than a rise of price? How long would it take the food administration to reach the millions of people away from the centres of population so effectively, as they would be reached by an increase of a few cents a pound in the price of sugar?

And what will restrict the sale of luxuries so effectively, as the high cost of necessities? Surely any undue profiteering based on war necessity could be amply taken care of by taxation.

Let us have done with regulation and restriction; let us on with construction and incentive. Work wins wars. Let us be allowed to work.

INGALLS KIMBALL.

New York City.

Land and the Housing Question

SIR: In your issue of January 12th, Mr. Robert Anderson Pope deals with some of the possible methods of financing the building of workmen's houses to meet the present emergency shortage, and he approves the program set forth by Mr. Frederick L. Ackerman which is quoted from the December issue of the Journal of the American Institute of Architects.

Mr. Pope's observations in respect to state or municipal loans, backed by a governmental guaranty, are obviously the kind of suggestions which are in line with constitutional custom, since the right of the federal government to invade the province of the state and interfere in such a question in normal times is at least doubtful. But there is no doubt of federal rights at this time, and how many states could or would act quickly enough? It seems inconceivable that in the present dire emergency there should be any stress except upon the stern insistence that the matter be dealt with instantly, and that all questions of financial adjustment or legality be laid over until after the war. The federal government alone can act quickly enough to meet the imperative necessity which now confronts us, and it has had before it for over four months a programme almost identical with that now under discussion.

Timidity, weakness, indecision and lack of imagination have operated to produce the maximum of masterly inactivity during the autumn building season and now to thrust forward a scheme which England tried and abandoned. But even that is jeopardized by the same timidity and indecision.

When Mr. Pope says that, "The success of our war-housing administration is now being threatened by various professional interests, especially those of the architects and town planners," may I say that it seems a little unfair to give at least the appearance of damning two professions in such a generalization? For the kind of men who have sought to turn the present crisis to their personal profit I have an abhorrence not surpassed by Mr. Pope's. On the other hand I have an equal amount of sympathy for those men who have devoted years to the study of the so-called housing questions, and along the broad lines which are so completely ignored by so many of those who claim a technical expertness. They have been obliged to sit supinely by while others tried to learn. It is not unlikely that after the war, or even before, we shall discover that we have been conducting some very expensive kindergartens at Washington, of which the one devoted to the housing question may not prove to be the least costly.

But making full allowance for the hampering and hindering effect produced by any or all selfish activities, the plain fact remains that this effect was entirely due to the lack of knowledge on the part of those who have had the question in hand. Men who have studied housing as it has been developed throughout the world for the last fifty years would not have been worried, or annoyed, or flustered, or disconcerted by the remedies which were thrust in their faces. They would have been able to diagnose and prescribe, to act with certainty and expedition, instead of falling back upon the selfish attitude of others as an excuse for their professional cogitations. These are the times to let beginners alone and to consult with the really expert, with men who join to their knowledge of the past and their understanding of the present some ability to look forward into the future.

The latter qualification is barely less important than the other two. The drift of foreign housing experience has been so marked during the last ten years that, taken in connection with England's magnificent application of the lessons she has learned from that experience, only the stupidest of the stupid could fail to see the line along which this question will march irresistibly in the future. The house question begins with the land on which it is to be built. Every housing operation, no matter by whom conducted, which does not deal with the land problem in a manner which shall conserve the land increment to the occupants, for their benefit but not for their pocket, and which does not provide that the increment of the neighboring land shall not accrue to the individual owners thereof when the time comes to take it for house building pur-

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poses, simply makes each succeeding operation more and more costly. The result is less house value, either in quality or in size, in order to keep the rental within reach of the occupant's pocket-book. The end of this is slums and congestion, with an endless rise and fall of realty values, and not until the poisonous effect of handing land increments outright to the owners is completely destroyed is there any solution of the housing problem.

The proof of this has been piling up for two centuries. We are now in the acute stages of a chronic disease. But even in war, though we obtain the most ideal houses and homes possible through an emergency, unless the government's operations are administered by a non-profit land company such as Mr. Ackerman has suggested, the ultimate effect will be to increase the cost of each succeeding operation, with its attendant congestion and squalor. In many places where long settled communities would not throttle such a method of administration, it is conceivable that the government might entirely recoup itself for the cost of its houses through conservation of land increments, with an additional yearly revenue from rentals such as would prove an example to the country.

The old past is dead and gone, said the President in his last address, and the new future will be different. In no manner will it be more different than in the attitude we shall have to adopt toward the question of the house and the home for even the humblest of our workers. Bearing this in mind, it seems pathetic to a degree that we cannot now inaugurate a genuinely progressive method of dealing with the problem, even though we are face to face with an emergency which has long demanded relief, and which now threatens to seize upon our very vitals.

CHARLES HARRIS WHITAKER.

Mr. Bok's Map

SIR: In your issue of February 2nd you say, in an editorial note on page three with regard to the agreement between the Dutch government and our War Trade Board: "The concessions to Holland are sufficient to quiet the resentment that was accumulating in Holland against America."

Will you kindly tell me where this country, Holland, as you call it, is? I do not find it on my map.

EDWARD BOK.

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

A Question of Emphasis

SIR: Admitting the marked deficiencies of successful organization which exist in Wilson's war administration, and admitting the desirability of stringent criticism, is it not possible that some of the critical articles in the New Republic have erred as to perspective and relative emphasis? Mr. Hard's confession of his adulatory attitude toward Ex-President Roosevelt tended to weaken the confidence of many of your readers in his strictures. This is perhaps illogical; probably it involves injustice to Mr. Hard. But it also raises a question as to the standpoint to be taken in judging central and subsidiary values. There are some of us who believe that the human factor is the one which must count the most, in the long run, in winning the war—that it is the point of view from which to approach even the question of administrative efficiency. Now from this point of view it is not very encouraging to see criticism centering upon Mr. Baker who, with Mr. Daniels and Mr. Wilson, of the Labor Department, has shown most consciousness of the significance of the human factor. It is natural that his position should place him in the focus of attention. But perhaps criticism as to Mr. Lansing, as to Mr. Burleson, and as to Mr. Gregory (who seems to bring to his duties the complete attitude of the "vigorous" city prosecuting attorney) might be the better placed. Perhaps their elimination from the cabinet might be the political change most called for. Doubtless this suggestion will seem highly remote to one whose eyes are fixed upon efficiency in war administration. But if the two ultimate problems of efficiency concern the human side of democratic diplomacy and the human side (the labor side) of control of production, the suggestions may at least indicate why some readers who are in hearty agreement with the spirit of your reply to Mr. Vestal still do not feel that your reply touched and met the spirit of his letter.

D.

Puzzled by Forgiveness

SIR: I do not understand the attitude of Mr. Clark, of the Christian Endeavor Society. He feels that the conversation you published between "Jehovah" and the Kaiser was blasphemous. I do not agree. It is the Kaiser who strikes me as blasphemous, if anybody; not the writer of your article. But quite aside from all that, what does Mr. Clark mean by excusing you, and mildly expressing the hope that you won't repeat the offense? Is that the way to treat blasphemy?

If one of Mr. Clark's favorite relatives were to be murdered, would he merely say to the murderer, "Well, don't do it again, my dear fellow"—and invite him to dinner?

Yet here is a journal which (he believes) has done something far worse: it has (he believes) blasphemed his God. "I have never read anything more blasphemous in the works of the rankest atheists," he tells you. And then he says if you want to keep his regard, please don't do it again.

This is lax. This is flabby. I object to having such a person on your list as my fellow-subscriber. It is obviously Mr. Clark's duty to stop his subscription.

L. E. HEWSON.

New York City.

Constructive Sabotage

SIR: "Sabotage" is a sinister word. Applied at first to those activities of labor that looked toward the limitation of output to the detriment of the employer, it found an extension of meaning when as "capitalistic sabotage," it was applied to the limitation of output on the part of the employer to the detriment of the consumer. Its usefulness is not however exhausted by this first extension of meaning for there is also a "constructive sabotage." The appointment of a man to office or the retention of a man in office when his presence hampers maximal production, is virtual sabotage, unless the appointing authority is quite unable to see what is happening. We have seen men kicked upstairs but not into the attic where they belonged, we have seen men retained in positions of great responsibility although imagination boggles at the notion that any one believes them to be the persons that could ensure maximal production. Partisanship cannot justify sabotage, personal loyalty cannot justify sabotage. This is a time when nothing can justify it and when we may well say "Woe unto him from whom the offence cometh."

LEO STEIN.

New York City.

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Books and Things

THE title of the book has perished, but I know it was a work of edification, of quotations hortatory, minacious, tonic, compassionate. Years ago somebody gave it me, when I was thirteen or fourteen, and of its several hundred entries, each followed by the author's name, I still remember this: "God will never forsake you.—E. H. Chapin." Part of my life has been spent in hunting for words worthy of a place beside these words, and at last, here and now, in a foot-note to page 386 of Pearson's Magazine for March, I find what I had sought: "The Ballad of Reading Gaol will live longer than anything written in England from 1875 to 1900.—Frank Harris."

Neither Harris nor Frank is a rare name, but of all the Harrises now in the New York telephone directory only seven are Franks. Surely each of these, and each of all the other Frank Harrises now above ground, might have tact enough not to write over his own name. They ought, every one of them, to wait until men have forgotten the real Frank Harris, the author of certain books about Shakespeare, the author of Elder Conklin. Do I mean that these unlucky mortals should be kept out of their own names for the rest of their lives? I mean this and more. Not in the present generation, if I were name dictator, or in the next or the next, would anybody be permitted to sign his manuscript Frank Harris.

What ought to be done about any Frank Harris who persistently disdained to use a pseudonym? To him should be conceded, freely and not uncheerfully, the privilege of not writing at all. Would the round reading world be the poorer for his silence? Would heaven want one immortal song? Perhaps. And perhaps not. Take the Frank Harrises who abound, as I discover by buying a few recent numbers, in Pearson's Magazine, which seems to order its Frank Harrises by the car load. Could the world spare their writings? Let us see.

The reporter who calls himself Frank Harris, in Pearson's for February, has no ear for the idiosyncrasies which make A's talk unlike B's. In Henry James: An Impression, by Frank Harris, Henry James says this: "I never heard Sainte-Beuve run down before; the French writers all admire him." Henry James might have said so. It is barely conceivable. But if I had been dining with Trotzky, and undertook to reproduce his talk by nothing but such remarks as "no sugar" or "two lumps," you would suspect either me of misrepresenting him or my presence of having caused Trotzky to misrepresent himself. Above all, if you found me reporting more of my talk than of Trotzky's, you would infer that Trotzky was not the real subject of my article. Equally plain is the inference from this Pearson's article, where Henry James talks eighteen and a half lines to Frank Harris and Frank Harris talks thirty-four lines to Henry James.

But perhaps we are putting this Frank Harris to an unfair test as a reporter of talk. He may have understood Henry James too little, and disliked him too unintelligently, to report his talk with likeness to life. Evidence for this apologetic hypothesis may be found in several phrases torn from their context: "Not a man to interest me in any degree"—"I never read another line of Henry James"—"and tossed the book aside, never again to be opened"—"Henry James almost immediately confirmed my somewhat contemptuous opinion of his intelligence"—"After the first greeting I paid no attention to him."

Well, let us make another cast, let us try the Frank Harris who contributes, to Pearson's Magazine for January, A Pen Portrait of Walter Pater. At the outset one is reassured by the discovery that this time, at any rate, the painter does not lack interest in his sitter. This Frank Harris approached Pater "somewhat shocked and tremendously curious." He had heard a rumor which quickened his interest and instigated him to read all that Pater had written. And the result of this interest is an article which is better, no end better, than the article on Henry James. Better, but far from well. We get an interesting account of Pater's way of working; we learn how Frank Harris talked better about style, at a dinner with Pater and Oscar Wilde and Matthew Arnold, than anybody else; we learn what Pater and Frank Harris had to eat and drink one evening, and how Frank Harris carried his liquor better than Pater, who got a little drunk and said things. Well, everybody who takes too much says things he is sorry for, just as everybody who doesn't drink says things he wishes he had been drunk when he said. The most general impression left by this Pen Portrait is that Frank Harris would have seen Pater more clearly if Frank Harris had not been so eager to know whether that rumor, the one about Pater as an "apologist of strange sins," were true or false.

No, that is not the most general impression. The most general of all is that both Frank Harrises, the Impressionist and the Portraitist, are men who fancy themselves. Now of course it is true, of every man who has words to sell, whether he offer his wares as epic, novel, comedy, pen portrait or impression, that he takes readers for granted. He assumes that somebody will be interested. It is, strictly speaking, a monstrous assumption. The cheek of it is vast. To a just eye, placed at a decent distance from this planet, all writers must look alike in their egotism. Seen from a certain remote point of view Byron's ego is no larger than Ricardo's, Pepys's no larger than Euclid's. But to us, too familiar with the writing tribe to be astonished when one more author asks us to listen to him, there are degrees in egotism, interesting little markings which distinguish one egotist from another. As an egotist Boswell ranks high, but he has left us one of the most disinterested books in the world. George Moore ranks high, but he knows how to use his interest in himself as a means of painting people who are not himself. Frank Harris ranks so high in this good company that he ceases to be a member of it. Upon meeting other men he looks in his glass and straightway forgets what manner of men they were. I wish he would stop writing about other men. I wish he would stop writing, in the voice of a fascinated school-girl, about what he calls "strange sins." I wish he would try to write about nothing but the one subject nearest his heart, himself. And I wish he would not call this subject Frank Harris.

Later. Since writing the above a most sensational report has been brought to my attention. Some one who is in a position to know says he has it on good authority that all the Frank Harrises now on Pearson's Magazine add up to one man, and that this one man is the real Frank Harris, the Frank Harris with a touch of genius, the author of Elder Conklin and of certain books about Shakespeare. This report I refuse to believe. If I believed it I should destroy what I have written. In spirit of piety I should take a garment, lay it upon both my shoulders, go backward, and cover the nakedness of Frank Harris by dropping the garment upon Pearson's Magazine. And I should never read Pearson's again. I should be afraid of committing the sin of Ham.

P. L.

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Sister Carrie

Sister Carrie, by Theodore Dreiser. New York: Boni & Liveright. $1.50.

IT is pleasant, of course, to be steadily admired for one's earliest big achievement. One's earliest big achievement usually determines the ground on which later reputation is erected, and it is gratifying to have it secure. But there is a possibility that the early novel may be liked too well. From being told that The Old Wives' Tale was a great novel Mr. Arnold Bennett has practically come to be told that it is the one great novel that he has ever written, a cold sort of comfort to a persistent growing writer. The same type of praise in Mr. Dreiser's case has often been offered to Sister Carrie. It is a shabby compliment, though of course it does make the reader of Jennie Gerhardt and The "Genius" quite anxious to discover what Sister Carrie is like.

This fresh reprint thrusts the opportunity on belated readers. Strictly contemporaneous as Sister Carrie was, it is now nearly twenty years old and has even acquired a historical tone in that short period. Department stores were novel, for example, when Mr. Dreiser was composing Sister Carrie and his description of them was red-hot modernism at the time. It is now quaintly archaic in the same way as his references to the Waldorf and the Wellington and the Casino Theatre and cable cars and cabs and the intensely fashionable Sherry's. But for all the changes in that dress of strict contemporaneity on which novelists rightly pride themselves, Sister Carrie still enmeshes life and is worth revaluing today.

Mr. Dreiser is Bœotian in this first novel. He is still beyond doubt the clumsiest novelist of any prominence in English at present, and this heavy, flat-bottomed story of 557 pages shows him in his rough beginnings. How such a writer ever came to produce such a story is not easy to see, considering the illiteracy that plainly hampered him, and the lumbering self-consciousness of his relation to his early characters. It is only necessary to quote the chapter headings that Mr. Dreiser wrote at this stage of his career to recall the pompous romanticism out of which he was struggling. The heading of chapter four is this, "The Spendings of Fancy: Facts Answer with Sneers." Chapter five, "A Glittering Night Flower: The Use of a Name." Chapter seven, "The Lure of the Material: Beauty Speaks for Itself." Chapter nine, "Convention's Own Tinder-Box: The Eye that Is Green." Chapter eleven, "The Persuasion of Fashion: Feeling Guards O'er Its Own." Chapter nineteen, "An Hour in Elfland: A Clamour Half Heard." Chapter twenty, "The Lure of the Spirit: The Flesh in Pursuit." Chapter thirty-eight, "In Elfland Disporting: The Grim World Without." The distinguished intention of these titles is obvious, but there was something in Mr. Dreiser that really demanded crimson plush upholstery. He had his affinity with Laura Jean Libbey, quite as unquestionable as his affinity with Balzac. He was in no sense free-spirited and clear and lithe. Considering his murky magniloquence and the turbid notion of "woman" that even then possessed him, the miracle of Sister Carrie is all the more surprising. The book is untutored, as if Mr. Dreiser were a violinist who used his left hand foolishly or an actor who tripped himself with his feet, and yet it has a powerful vitality, it leaves its endurable impression of life observed and interpreted and understood. Had Mr. Dreiser been tutored, in the best sense, it is pretty certain that Sister Carrie would have been a much greater novel. It is painfully imperfect. The remarkable fact is its triumph in spite of itself.

The gaucherie of Sister Carrie goes farther than chapter headings. When Mr. Dreiser feels it necessary to instruct the reader, whether as to the wonder of life or the true nature of woman or the secrets of philosophy, he is one of the most amazing philistines that ever came out of Indiana. His tendency to exhortation is perfectly simple-hearted, but it always succeeds in spoiling the illusion of his story and concentrating a solemn attention on his importunate self. This may sound supercilious, but think of a novelist who sprinkles his pages with such reflections as these:

"It lessens a woman's opinion of a man when she learns that his admiration is so pointedly and generously distributed. She sees but one object of supreme compliment in this world, and that is herself. If a man is to succeed with many women, he must be all in all to each."

"A lovely home atmosphere is one of the flowers of the world, than which there is nothing more tender, nothing more delicate, nothing more calculated to make strong and just the natures cradled and nourished within it. Those who have never experienced such a beneficent influence will not understand wherefore the tear springs glistening to the eyelids at some strange breath in lovely music. The mystic chords which bind and thrill the heart of the nation, they will never know."

"It was not often that she came to the play stirred to her heart's core by actualities. To-day a low song of longing had been set singing in her heart by the finery, the merriment, the beauty, she had seen. Oh, these women who had passed her by, hundreds and hundreds strong, who were they? Whence came the rich, elegant dresses, the astonishingly colored buttons, the knick-knacks of silver and gold? Where were these lovely creatures housed? Amid what elegancies of carved furniture, decorated walls, elaborate tapestries did they move? Where were their rich apartments, loaded with all that money could provide? In what stables champed these sleek, nervous horses and rested the gorgeous carriages? Where lounged the richly groomed footmen? Oh, the mansions, the lights, the perfume, the loaded boudoirs and tables! New York must be filled with such bowers, or the beautiful, insolent, supercilious creatures could not be."

Mr. Dreiser's hand is not light, if these passages are at all representative, and before he begins to develop the character of Hurstwood he flounders from one unhappy flight of generalization to another. But the astonishing fact about Sister Carrie is its tenacious grip on a tremendous drama of character once the fumbling is over. It is that drama, seen as Balzac might have seen it and told in the manner of a Balzac disciple, that lifts Sister Carrie out of its own bathos and makes it memorable.

Mr. Dreiser, as it seems now, was not quite equal to paralleling the development of Hurstwood with an equally sure development of Carrie. The tension of that first year on the stage which led to success has by no means the same vividness as the tension of those early days in the Chicago factory when she starts earning her four and a half a week, and the exciting actuality of her life as Drouet's mistress. The emphasis of the story, indeed, shifts sharply from Carrie to Hurstwood once the girl severs her connection with him and lets him slide to his finish. But aside from this relaxation of interest in Carrie the last two-thirds of the story is a creation of singular movement and solidity and impact. It staggers one like a

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chapter of intimate revelations. It thrills one, like a key to things seen but not previously understood. It is impartial, simple, tense, pervasive. It saturates the reader with a consciousness of fellowships grim yet tolerable, destinies undesirable yet beyond redemption. The downfall of Hurstwood is handled with a touching simplicity quite in contrast with Mr. Dreiser's early sententiousness and pretentiousness, with his own nostalgia for success whenever he discusses it, his bumbling elucidation of "woman."

Because Carrie ceases very soon to be an "honest working-girl," first becomes the mistress of a genial drummer and then is carried off by the absconding Hurstwood, there is an air of dire realism about Mr. Dreiser's novel. The question is whether it is realistic enough. Mr. Dreiser apparently starts out intending to show that Carrie wants pleasure ("her craving for pleasure was so strong that it was the one stay of her nature"), but works it out in the utterly sentimental ending that she was always "emotional," "responding with desire to everything most lovely in life," pursuing "beauty," pursuing the "radiance of delight," and so on. "Not evil," says the apologetic novelist, "but longing for that which is better, more often directs the steps of the erring." This is mush. His grip on Hurstwood's character is entirely different. That man's transition from a cold and successful "swell saloon" manager to a bum on the Bowery is firmly interpreted, and the novelist is master of every stage of it, Hurstwood's theft, his partnership in a cheap saloon, his aboulia, his chair-warming in hotel lobbies, his cadging, his effort as a strike-breaker, his exit. Mr. Dreiser makes Hurstwood a terrible and pathetic figure without faltering in any detail; and there is no Laura Jean Libbey nonsense such as "Oh, Carrie, Carrie! Oh, blind strivings of the human heart! Onward, onward, it saith, and where beauty leads, there it follows." And so on.

Ever since the realists, so-called, left the parlor and the drawing-room to interpret the aims of instinct as something other than merely reprehensible, there has been a desperate misunderstanding of modern fiction on the part of many idealistic people. It is one of the unfortunate aspects of Mr. Dreiser's work, as it seems to me, that he has promoted this misunderstanding by giving us a series of persons with sclerosis of the affections under the guise of persons obeying their instincts and going their own way. In Sister Carrie herself, for example, one misses all the warmth of human intercourse that is generally meant by "emotional," and Mr. Dreiser's interpretative moonbeams are no substitute. It is not that Sister Carrie is cool. It is not that she regards Drouet and Hurstwood as stepping-stones to higher things. It is that Mr. Dreiser takes this incompleteness of personality with such complacency, and says, "it is but natural that when the world which they represented no longer allured her, its ambassadors should be discredited." There we suspect that Carrie's sclerosis is more than Carrie's, that her author is impervious to certain aspects of character and deficient in crediting certain springs of action. But if Mr. Dreiser's sentimental gush about "beauty" is an imperfect equivalent for a large sense of woman's character, especially when it is undeveloped, his portrait of Drouet and his absorbing drama of Hurstwood are beyond cavil. In Hurstwood an American novelist came royally into his own.

The disintegration of Hurstwood is so graphic, so clinching, that one regrets every instance of Mr. Dreiser's direct critical analysis of life. The gift that distinguishes Mr. Dreiser is a peculiar and limited one, and it is only when he employs it that Sister Carrie is notable. He is one of those men who undoubtedly feel beauty but he gives less sense of it, shows less effect of enchantment, than any novelist of equal account. His tone is one of dour, humorless, almost sullen matter-of-fact. He takes life as some people voluntarily take goulash in a restaurant, with a gloomy hunger for it that would make a Savarin weep. It is not his love of beauty, nor is it his capacity for subtle and sensitive psychological disclosure, that makes Sister Carrie a living book. The psychological disclosure in the case of Hurstwood is largely implicit, and we really never are able to put ourselves very easily in Sister Carrie's shoes —as we are always able to translate ourselves into the shoes of Tolstoy's or Dostoevsky's people. It is not philosophy, either, explicit interpretation of life, that enriches Mr. Dreiser. His almost complete ignorance of the cooperative element in life, his clanking mechanistic generalizations, rather destroy than promote the illusion of his stories. But there does remain, despite ugliness and bluntness and stub-toed philosophy, a thick-tongued passionateness of dramatic interest which arouses an undeniable response in the reader. Mr. Dreiser is an honest witness to those stubborn human eventualities which, after all, are the substance of fiction. He sees careers as a whole, and personalities in their unfolding, and the natural history of social incident. To say his gift, often a gift neglected and perverted, is plain narrative is probably to put the cart before the horse. But certainly when his creative moment comes it is thick and ramified narrative that rewards the reader, not any soulfulness. Mr. Dreiser knows what an Elk entertainment is like. He knows pretty well what a street-car strike is like, and the experience of a scab. He knows, though with a perturbed Delineator spirit, what a lunch at Sherry's might be like. When this information is fused by Mr. Dreiser's excitement about a character, we get his best work, particularly if the character is an American business man. That best work is so titanic that all sorts of dross cannot kill it. It lives, as Sister Carrie has lived, and will live.

F. H.

Lord Acton

Correspondence of Lord Acton. Vol. I. Edited by J. N. Figgis and R. V. Laurence. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. $5.00.

LITTLE by little the editors of this volume are giving us to understand something of what the world has lost in Lord Acton's failure to achieve that history which, as a shrewd observer has happily remarked, is without exception the greatest book that was never written. Had we nothing save these letters by which to judge him it would be still clear that he was a figure of European significance. He belonged to that small group of cosmopolitan observers who constitute the unseen threads which bind together the society of nations. He influenced the course of politics in not a few of the decisive moments of the nineteenth century. If, in the greatest of his battles, he seems to have been upon the losing side, it is yet not today certain whether in the end victory will not belong to the cause he championed. To the outside world Acton seems but the greatest failure of his time. Yet that is in every sense of the word an inaccurate verdict. Most of his plans, it is true, went astray. He rarely completed any of the great schemes he undertook. There went with him

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to the grave more unused learning than perhaps any man will ever possess again. Instead of the great History of Liberty we shall have three volumes of letters, two volumes of lectures, and two collections of reprinted pieces.

From men like Bryce and Morley we shall know that his intellectual counsel was of priceless value. From his correspondence with Mr. Gladstone's daughter we shall realize what a pillar of strength he was to the hesitating liberalism of that statesman. The Cambridge Modern History will stand as the fragment wrought by lesser hands from materials which he alone could have shaped to their true splendor. Certain prefaces from the works of pupils, and a few lines in the exquisite notice of Maitland will tell us of the inspiration he was to ten years of Cambridge students.

For an ordinary man this would be no light achievement. But, as a bare record it does Acton less than the merest justice. It does not emphasize, as nothing but intimate contact can adequately emphasize, the quality of the fragments he has left. Certain of his papers, as that on German Schools of History, and the fine study of Dollinger, set, each in its own sphere, the perspective of an age. The two great lectures on freedom are full of superb generalization which can only be truly appreciated by those who have tried to tread the same path. The famous, if elusive, introduction to Machiavelli's Prince is the best antidote to the poison it analyzes. The book on the French Revolution is not a book for beginners; but to anyone who is seeking the intimate causes of things it is unsurpassed in any language. And it contains an appendix on the relative value of the printed authorities which is, to say the least, a training in the true meaning of scholarship.

The scholar's mark is present, indeed, on every page that Acton wrote; and no other writer in the English language save Mark Pattison combines the same universality of interest with the same profundity of learning. The essay on the Massacre of Saint Bartholomew sets a model for Catholic historians. It is always scholarship that has a definite end in view. It is never the patient accumulation of facts for their own sake. It is always a realization that the true perception of causes must be based on the largest induction that life makes possible. There is a sense, perhaps, in which the reading of these mighty fragments can only deepen, at every stage, the sense of what we have lost. But, in a truer perspective, we must admit that few achievements have been their equal in inspiration.

No one can understand Lord Acton's work who does not grasp the significance of the fact that he united a passionate belief in the Catholic faith to a trust in liberalism not less passionate. He believed that his religion, in its purest form, had an infallible recipe for the spiritual ills of mankind. He never doubted that behind the acts of its ministers, which he had too often to condemn, there remained the great body of the faithful who collectively represented religious truth. He cherished the ideal of a great church which should be the fostering parent of social progress and scientific advance. He denied that she had anything to gain by the suppression of truth or anything to lose by its discovery. He was the determined and untiring opponent of ultramontanism. No one, save Lamennais in the generation before, and Dollinger in his own time, fought more nobly against the obscurantism of Rome. He hated the economizing liberalism of Newman hardly less than the egregious autocracy of Manning. He understood from the outset that scientific truth, whether in the history of theology or in the history of chemistry, must be made objective and not subjective. The question as to whether Pope Honorius III was a heretic, or whether Gregory XIII struck a medal to commemorate the massacre of Saint Bartholomew, was for him a problem to be investigated exactly as one investigates the nature of the earth's crust.

Because he did not love Thomas à Kempis, that did not make him hate Darwin. If there was one thing he did detest, it was the calm pretense to scholarship that so easily passes current for learning. If there was one thing for which he had no mercy, it was the prostitution of scholarship to polemic purposes. It was for this that he drew up his unanswerable indictment against ultramontanism. It was for this that he drew up his forces in strenuous battle against the definition of papal infallibility. The material with which he and Bishop Strossmayer supplied Dollinger forms, in the Letters of Quirinus, the most overwhelming indictment of Roman policy that has ever appeared, with but one exception. The difficulty is to understand how he was able to remain in the Roman church. Partly, perhaps, because the minimizing tendencies which prevailed deprived the decree of its sting. Partly, also, because, as a layman, he did not think it his duty to invite a challenge that was not offered. But few who hold the character of Lord Acton as one of the great possessions of the Victorian age can avoid a dim regret that, whatever the personal cost, he did not take his stand with Lamennais and Dollinger, with Tyrrell and Loisy, in that magistral protest against the vices of ecclesiastical autocracy.

His view of history has been the subject of bitter controversy; and certainly we are no nearer the decision than when he wrote. The whole burden of Acton's teaching was the fervent belief that the divorce of politics from ethics is at every point disastrous. The standards of public conduct cannot differ from those of private life. We must judge the statesman as we judge the man of business. For the condition of the time no allowance is to be made. What is wrong in the London of the nineteenth century is wrong in Athens four hundred years before Christ. Raison d'état is, not for him, an admissible defense; it is only a dishonorable method of obtaining release from an honest engagement. So he would have made of history the axe of Rhadamanthus; and sentence would have been delivered at every trial. He denied that the highest demands of conscience must give way before the lower exactions of expediency. If he were told that political death may be involved in the decision, he would have answered with Royer-Collard that to perish is also a solution. He was told that it is not a creed for practical men; even Lord Morley has admitted that politics is a matter of half-measures. The potency of the Machiavellian faith has, it is asserted, its justification in its realistic perception of human nature. Yet the guess may perhaps be hazarded that at no time was the warning more sternly needed against the confusion of right with expediency. The moral law may lack the unchanging content he would have given it; yet one thing is certain in our time, it is the danger that confronts any social organization of which the moral practice is not at every point instinct with the highest motive.

The most permanent aspect of Acton's work is that in which he accomplished least. He had a high passion for liberty such as few can understand; and it was perhaps

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because he understood it so deeply that he loved it so well. What to him liberty above all meant was freedom of conscience; and he did not shrink from the admission that he was bound thereby to deny the paramountcy of the state. "By liberty," he said, "I mean the assurance that every man shall be protected in doing what he believes his duty against the influence of authority and majority, custom and opinion." It is perhaps a counsel of perfection. Certainly it is a counsel that at every stage will encounter acute difficulties of practical operation. Yet it is a maxim of which, not least in these times, we have good reason to take heed. Acton saw clearly the danger that confronts us lest the state, being identified with society, becomes the Leviathan of Hobbes's imagining.

He realized that the real test of a people's freedom is the amount of security enjoyed by minorities. Few who are not blinded by prejudice can today doubt that he was right. The only real security for social wellbeing is the free exercise of men's minds; otherwise we have impliedly contracted ourselves to slavery. This assuredly is the only real democracy that the decision of the mind should have the sanction of the conscience. A state that usurps the function of either has already become a mask for despotism.

Defects, of course, Lord Acton had. He had too much of the massive stolidity of the German scholar, too much, also, of that oracular sententiousness which never descends to the level of the commonplace. His blindness to Mr. Gladstone's faults is as strange as his failure to appreciate Disraeli's virtues. His mind ranged so freely amid the eternal verities that he took no thought of the basic economic problems of his time. He never realized the noble effort that in men like John Stuart Mill and Lord Morley can go to the retention of religious scepticism. Again and again he fell into the scholar's luxury of proving the obvious by laborious text and counter-text. He was guilty of elusiveness. He tried to cast his net too far. The task he undertook no man could have performed in the perspective he set himself. The historian of liberty, when he comes, will be content to leave unread those chapters of the record that deal with witchcraft or the man in the iron mask. No man can make a specialty of omniscience and hope to write the book of which Acton dreamed. No one can wander, as he wandered, from the great highroads of history, and yet proclaim the truth that is in him.

Yet for what remains our one thought must be gratitude. These letters alone would display that too rare mind which occupies itself with the solution of the greatest questions in a manner that is worthy of the enquiry. He had the same passion for the discovery of truth that possessed men so diverse as Darwin and Huxley in his own age as Casaubon and Spinoza before him. Like the last of these it was his constant effort to see things under the microscope of eternity. Like the Dutch thinker, his life was a lonely search consecrated to the loftiest purposes. He bases upon a knowledge constantly more profound a unique passion for righteousness. He influenced the intellectual mind of Europe towards wisdom. Few of his contemporaries there were who understood; fewer still who gave that full meed of comradeship for which he yearned. It is to him that we shall constantly go back for inspiration in the understanding of the great truths he inculcated. If he judged humanity, he also loved it; and because he loved it he pardoned it. It is a pardon, as Maitland said, that we have still to earn.

H. J. L.

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Marx and the Theatre

The Insurgent Theatre, by Professor Thomas H. Dickinson. New York: B. W. Huebsch.

The Art Theatre, by Sheldon Cheney. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

The Community Theatre, by Louise Burleigh. Boston: Little, Brown & Co.

The Little Theatre, by Constance D'Arcy MacKay. New York: Henry Holt & Co.

THE Insurgent theatre, the Art theatre, the Community theatre, and the Little theatre—four names, and they all mean the same thing. Evidently something new has appeared, significant enough to call forth a small shelf of books, yet inchoate enough to set authors groping for a definition and even for a name. It is, in fact, a spontaneous and independent theatre growth, now in its awkward, exuberant youth, half consciously clutching after an organization and a theory. Physically it comprises some dozens of local stock companies, a handful of traveling companies, some three score little semi-amateur theatres scattered over the country, two or three established houses on Broadway, half a dozen permanent college dramatic organizations, hundreds of sporadic open-air festivals, and innumerable amateur acting clubs. And each of these four writers means to include them all under his title.

It is difficult to suggest an inclusive name or definition for all these theatres. They can be defined only in terms of what they are not. They are not, for instance, the commercial theatre owned and controlled on Broadway; they are, in fact, its counter-product. They differ in every con-

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ceivable way. Professor Dickinson finds the root distinction in "their differing standards of support." He concludes by itemizing production costs, that "if a production is to stay alive it must make $7,000 a week or more," and must "draw at least nine thousand people a week for an indefinite number of weeks." From this it follows that the theatre manager, with each of his productions, must try to please everybody if he is to make money. Of course he ends by pleasing nobody in particular. Even the man about town, the lowest known form of discriminating animal, remains critical and unimpressed.

Starting, with sound instinct, from the material basis, Professor Dickinson has, in fact, drawn up a very pretty case for what an orthodox socialist would call the economic determinism of art. According to this formula an art inevitably tends to express the character and prejudices of those who pay its bills—or, as Professor Dickinson would put it, "the character of the theatre is determined by the character of its support." The American theatre, being supported by everybody without distinction, has become distressingly undistinguished. Seeking the common denominator of all who are possessed of two dollars, it has become helplessly common. Indeed, the socialist would point out that it has followed the exact course mapped out for capitalism and all its works in Das Kapital. It has evolved from sporadic enterprise, through extensive division of labor and ruinous competition, to the final stages of combination and virtual "trustification." It has overworked or underpaid its employees, adulterated its product, suppressed competition, extravagantly over-produced and wasted its substance in riotous advertising. It is at the present moment suffering one of its periodical panics, the result of its own unnatural expansion. The socialist might feel a wicked glee over this condition. He has always insisted that the private ownership of social capital (and the theatre is essentially social) inevitably perverts its functioning, limits its service and debases its product. He has pointed out that the capitalist cannot justly be expected to take an interest in the unprofitable phases of his business, however excellent or necessary. All this, in general terms, the socialist has repeated until he could sing it in his sleep. And now behold, it is even so.

The conclusion would seem to be that American municipalities should promptly endow and inaugurate their own theatres, as the city of Northampton has already done with notable success. But this, on a general scale, is quite impracticable. Social ownership demands a social mind, and this has been made impossible in theatrical affairs for years to come by American methods of drama hawking. Municipal theatres cannot be created by ordinance. They must grow spontaneously from small local groups.

This is precisely what is happening. These little semi-amateur theatres are not sporadic or accidental. They are the contrary pole set up by the action of the commercial theatre. They have sprung up from Boston to Los Angeles, at least seventy of them by actual count. They are persistent and multiplying. They represent a clumsy attempt to do the things which Broadway has found unprofitable, the things which nine thousand people a week won't come to see. They are insurgent in that they are trying to please somebody in particular. Because they are "artistic," in intent if not always in performance, they are for the moment necessarily little. And at the same time they represent a community of endeavor—in the actors who serve for little or no pay, in the patrons who guarantee the building, in the ardent friends who sew costumes and paint scenery, in the subscribers who buy their pig in a poke, and finally in the audience who sit through many an amateur atrocity for the sake of the thing that is trying to get itself accomplished.

For there is no pretense that these theatres are in any respect of first-rate excellence. A few, like the Chicago Little Theatre, and the Detroit Arts and Crafts Theatre, have made valuable and permanent contributions to the American stage. All, however, are important because of the plays they are acting, because of the dramatic taste they are slowly forming in the road-cursed provinces, because of their persistent survival and because of the brilliant future which now seems surely ahead of them. They are coming at a moment when Broadway has almost abandoned the provinces as profitless, and when the ideals and methods which they represent have (thanks largely to the Washington Square Players) gained a secure footing among the white lights of Manhattan. They are a sort of answer to capitalism in the theatre.

All this, express or implied, is to be found in these four books: in Professor Dickinson's compact analysis of present conditions and achievements; in Mr. Cheney's well digested résumé of aims and methods; in Miss Burleigh's enthusiastic exposition of the underlying social theory; and in Miss MacKay's hasty collation of records, bursting with inaccuracies. The resultant picture is confused, for these new theatres are themselves puzzling and bewildering. But the line of development seems definite. These despised amateur theatres are becoming a secure basis for a local repertory system, under public if not municipal ownership and control. So do not laugh at the little theatres the next time they assail you for a subscription to four bad performances. If they merit Mr. Belasco's vituperation, they merit your check.

H. K. M.

Assimilating Belgium

Through the Iron Bars: Two Years of German Occupation, by Emile Cammaerts. New York: John Lane Co. 75 cents.

THROUGH THE IRON BARS brings out the bitterness of the Belgian occupation, not by any coloring of the author's, but by simply presenting the progressive steps which the German administration of Belgium went through, as shown by their own documents and official notices, to arrive at the deportations. M. Cammaerts does not make any statements which the military governors of Belgium have not already given the world themselves. It is the juxtaposition of their statements by M. Cammaerts that brings out the cruel sophistries of military logic. He shows the Belgians suffering first the honorable wounds of a war of invasion until the fall of Antwerp, undergoing the conflict of armies and being conquered and defeated as soldiers outnumbered by the enemy are conquered and defeated, with a chance to fight back and falling with comrades to a well earned death. After the fall of Antwerp, the fight is one between an exacting, tyrannical army of occupation and a civil population forced to work against its own friends and brothers, completely isolated and disheartened by false news, with no means of resistance but the individual will and faith. Belgium is not treated as an erring and mistaken neighbor, to be coerced into the right attitude, the right philosophy and ideal; she is treated by the powers that be in Germany as a reservoir of available human energy and raw material, a matter of calories and foot-pounds. Germany is concerned with the process

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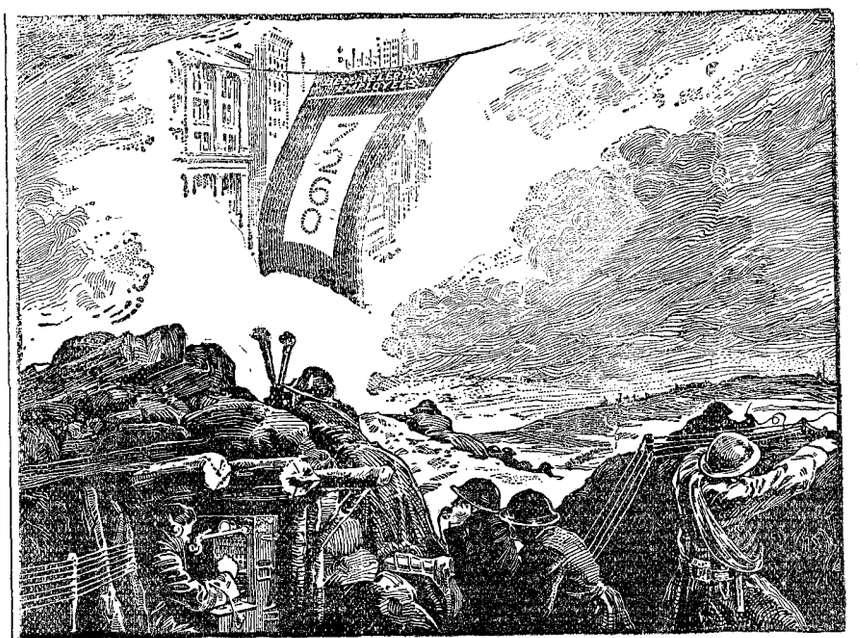

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of assimilating Belgium, and, as M. Cammaerts points out, the administration in Belgium only makes it the more sickening by dressing their wishes in "legality." It is rather refreshing when Major Hopfer, commandant of one of the smaller divisions, does things because it is his "good pleasure."

A few of Raemakers' cartoons serve to illustrate this book. Raemakers visualizes with more sentiment than power. He is not really a great artist. He has too much strut in him; his conceptions edge on the theatrical; he cannot actually touch us with pity or sympathy with his own power, but only as we are willing to be touched on account of our previous reactions toward the subjects he has chosen. In the present instance the text may have been intended to supplement the pictures, but if so the result reverses the intention.

Contributors

to this issue

H. G. WELLS is a frequent contributor to the New Republic.

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